

OUTRAGEOUS 1950s EC COMICS!

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NO. 10
JAN

THE VAULT OF



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CANADA

HORROR®

FEATURING



THE VIOLET CREEPER



THE CRYPT KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



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CRYPT #3



CRYPT #4



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SCI #3



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SCI #5



SCI #6



SHOCK #1



SHOCK #2



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SHOCK #4



SHOCK #5



SHOCK #6

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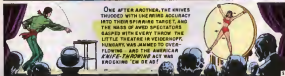
THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEI-HEI! YOU'RE RIGHT ON TIME! I SUPPOSE YOU WANT ANOTHER GRIZZLY TALE FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION HERE IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, EH? WELL, I HAVE A *SHARP* ONE FOR YOU THIS TIME! IT'S ABOUT A *CORPSE* WHO WANTED TO KNOW IF HE SHOULD PAY INCOME TAX. CONSIDERING THE *STATE* HE WAS IN! HEI-HEI! NO... I'M ONLY FOOLING! THE STORY I'M ABOUT TO TELL CONCERNS A *KANSASVILLE* ACT, AND I THINK YOU'LL ENJOY IT! IT'S TITLED...

ONE LAST FLING!



ONE AFTER ANOTHER, THE KNIVES THROVE WITH LHERING ACCURACY INTO THEIR SPINNING TARGET, AND THE MASS OF AWED SPECTATORS GASPED WITH EVERY THROW. THE LITTLE THEATRE IN VESDERHOFF, HUNGARY, WAS JAMMED TO OVERFLOWING... AND THE AMERICAN *KNIFE-THROWING* ACT WAS BROOKING 'EM GEARS!



WHEN THE LAST KNIFE HAD BEEN THROWN, HARRY BELL RELEASED HIS WIFE OLGA FROM THE WHIRLING DISC. AND TOGETHER THEY GRATEFULLY BOWED TO THE APPLAUSE THAT FILLED THE THEATRE.



THEY LIKED US, HARRY!



I'M GLAD THAT WAS OUR LAST SHOWING HERE! TOMORROW WE LEAVE FOR PARIS, SO LET'S GO TO THE HOTEL AND GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP!

SLEEP CAME EASILY FOR THE TWO WEARY TROUPEURS. IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON WHEN HARRY SLEEPILY OPENED HIS EYES.

HEY, HONEY, WAKE UP! OLGA, WAKE UP! OLGA! HEY, WHAT TH...? SHE'S... SHE'S SO PALE!



GOOD LORD! SHE'S DEAD!



HARRY'S EYES BRIMMED WITH TEARS AND HE SLUMPED BESIDE THE BED, HIS BODY WRACKED WITH GRIEF.

OLGA, HONEY, HONEY! WHAT'LL I DO WITHOUT YOU? OH!



FOR A LONG WHILE HARRY REMAINED BY HIS WIFE'S LIFELESS FORM. AND AFTER HIS GRIEVE WAS SPENT, HE LEFT THE HOTEL TO MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR HER BURIAL. IT WAS MID-EVENING WHEN HE RETURNED.



WELL, EVERYTHING'S BEEN READY! I, I SURE WILL MISS

IN MID-SENTENCE, HARRY STOPPED! HIS MOUTH DROPPED OPEN IN BEMUSEMENT AND HIS EYES STARED IN DISBELIEF.



WHY... WHY... SHE'S GONE!

IN CONFUSION, HE STUMBLED ABOUT THE SMALL ROOM CALLING HIS WIFE'S NAME. SUDDENLY, HE HEARD THE SOFT FLAPPING OF WINGS.



THE HUGE BAT FLUTTERED ITS WINGS BEFORE HIM. AND WHILE HARRY'S EYES BULGED, A STARTLING TRANSFORMATION TOOK PLACE.



OLGA, YOU'RE ALIVE! BUT YOU SEEM STRANGE! YOUR MOUTH IT'S COVERED WITH BLOOD... AND YOUR NECK. THERE ARE TWO HOLES IN YOUR NECK!



OLGA! YOU... YOU'RE A... YES, HARRY. I'M A VAM-PIRE!



BUT, I DON'T UNDERSTAND! HOW? WHEN? LAST NIGHT WHILE HE SLEPT! ALL I REMEMBER IS THAT I OPENED MY EYES AND SAW A BAT-LIKE CREATURE BENDING OVER ME!



EVERYTHING IS BLANK UNTIL I WOKED UP A FEW HOURS AGO AND SOME- HOW KNEW I HAD TO HAVE A VICTIM! HARRY, YOU'VE GOT TO PROTECT ME!

OF COURSE I'LL PROTECT YOU! WE'LL HAVE TO LEAVE HERE THOUGH! WE'LL GO TO THE STATES!



BUT NOW, HARRY! DURING THE DAY YOU'LL NEED A PLACE TO SLEEP! VAMPIRES CAN ONLY MOVE BETWEEN SUN-GOING AND SUN-UP! YOU'LL NEED SOME SORT OF BOX TO STAY IN DURING THE DAY! I HAVE IT!



HEADLINES ACROSS THE NATION ROARED THE NEWS OF EACH NEW NEMPHRE KILLING, BUT OLGA AND HARRY SEEMED TO LEAD A CHARMED LIFE. THEY ARGUED NO SUSPICION.



THE DAYS PASSED AND THE DEATH TOLL MOUNTED. HARRY'S GUILT BOTHERED HIM SO MUCH IT APPEARED HIS WORK.



OLGA, I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE! IT'S DRIVING ME CRAZY! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE! YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FEELINGS ABOUT MURDER?



ALL YOU CARE ABOUT IS SATISFYING SOME INSANE DESIRE, NO MATTER WHAT THE COST! BUT I'M HUMAN! I CAN'T TAKE IT!



WE'VE GOT TO STOP! HE DON'T HAVE ANY BOOKS FOR TWO MONTHS, SO I WANT YOU TO TRY TO STOP!



WHAT? WHAT? DO YOU MEAN, HARRY?



I'M GOING TO KICK YOU IN THE TRAILER! I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU OUT! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO MURDER ANTOINE TONIGHT!



HARRY, NO! PLEASE! DON'T DO THAT TO ME! PLEASE!

I'M SORRY, OLGA! BUT I HAVE TO DO IT! I'LL LOCK HIM THE DOOR, AND I'LL KEEP THE KEY!



THAT WON'T STOP ME, HARRY! I'LL BREAK THE LOCK. YOU KNOW THAT WON'T STOP ME!

I KNOW THE LOCK ALONE CAN'T STOP YOU. BUT THE CROSS WILL! VAMPIRES FEAR CROSSES AND I'M HANGING THIS ONE RIGHT ON THE DOOR! ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT!



THEY SLEPT AND IT WAS THE NEXT MORNING WHEN HARRY AWOKE.

WHOOOSH! BOY, DO I FEEL NOTHIN TODAY! SINGAWHAG! MHH... OLDS STILL SLEEPING!



HARRY AWOKE AND WENT ABOUT SNEEZING. HE NOTICED SOMETHING STRANGE UNTIL HE BEGAN SHAW-ING.

WHAT THE...? MY HECK? THERE ARE TWO HOLES IN MY HECK!



GOOD LORD! SHE TURNED ON ME! SHE TOOK SOME OF MY BLOOD LAST NIGHT!



THAT EVENING, WHEN OLGA AWOKE.

SIGA! WHY? WHY DID YOU DO IT TO ME? WHY?

OH, HARRY! HARRY, I'M SORRY! I COULDN'T HELP IT. I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOU! I WON'T DO IT AGAIN. I PROMISE! SIGHAG, I JUST TOOK... A LITTLE!



LATER THAT NIGHT.

HEW, REMEMBER! I'M LOCKING YOU IN AGAIN! I'M GOING TO PUT THE CROSS ON THE DOOR... BUT YOU'VE GOT TO PROMISE NOT TO ATTACK ME! YOU'VE GOT TO CONTROL YOURSELF!

OH, HARRY! I PROMISE, I PROMISE!



BUT WHEN HARRY AWOKE THE NEXT MORNING.

DOOSH! I-I FEEL WORSE THAN I DID YEE-YENAG! SO-DO WEAR... DIZZY!





SHE DID IT AGAIN!
SHE TOOK MY BLOOD AGAIN!
I... I CAN'T TRUST HER!
I'LL HAVE TO GET HER
FREE. ON I'LL DIE!



THAT EVENING...

OLGA, I'VE DISPOSED OF THE
CROSS! AND THE DOOR WILL BE
UNLOCKED TONIGHT! YOU'RE
YOU'RE FREE TO SEARCH FOR
A VICTIM!

THANK YOU,
HARRY



LAST AGAIN, AS BEFORE, WHEN
HARRY AWOKE THE FOLLOWING
MORNING...

I... I CAN HARDLY GET OUT OF BED!
WHAT'S THE MATTER? I'VE NEVER
BEEN SO... SO WEAK! OLGA MUST
MUST HAVE TAKEN SOME OF MY
BLOOD AGAIN!



BUT THE DOOR WAS OPEN! SHE
JUST DOESN'T CARE TO SEARCH
FOR SOMEONE ELSE WHEN I'M
SO NEAR!



OLGA CAN'T CONTROL HERSELF
AT ALL! I'M NOT SAFE WITH HER
ANYMORE! ANOTHER NIGHT AND I
MAY BE DEAD!



THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO!
I'VE GOT TO DESTROY HER
BEFORE SHE KILLS ME!



THAT EVENING THEY HAD A BOOKING. ON STAGE, HARRY
TRIED BRAVELY TO ACT AS IF NOTHING WERE WRONG! BUT
HE FOOLED NO ONE... *LEAST* OF ALL THE AUDIENCE

TOO... TOO WEAK TO THROW
STRAIGHT! MY ARM IS *RAO!*

BOOOO
BOOO
BOOO BOOO



HE TURNED TO THE AUDIENCE AND HELD UP HIS HAND FOR SILENCE! THE CROWD WERE DIMMED. A MUSH ENVELOPED THE THEATRE. THEN.



FROM BEHIND HIS BACK, HARRY BROUGHT FORTH A SPEAR-LIKE, WEIGHTED WOODEN STAKE! THE PUZZLED AUDIENCE SAY EXPLICITLY. BUT AS HARRY RAISED HIS ARM AND MUSTERED STRENGTH FOR A LAST DESPERATE THROW, A LOOK OF TERROR SUDDENLY CROOKED OLGA'S USUALLY PASSIVE FACE!



PETRIFIED, OLGA WATCHED AS HARRY'S ARM HURLED THE STAKE DIRECTLY AT HER HEART! SHE TRIED TO FREE HERSELF TO SCREAM! BUT IT WAS TOO LATE! THIS TIME HARRY'S AIM WAS DEADLY ACCURATE!



FOR A MOMENT THE AUDIENCE STARED UNBELIEVING! HARRY THWARTED TO THEM SLOWLY. WHILE A TEAR ROLLED DOWN HIS CHEEK, HE BOWED. AND THEN COLLAPSED IN A HEAP. THE LAST ACT WAS OVER!



WELL, ALL I CAN SAY IS THEY'D BETTER BURY HARRY WITH A STAKE IN *HIS* HEART, OR ELSE *HE*'LL BE TAKING UP WHERE OLGA LEFT OFF! NOW, IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN LEFT BLIND BY THIS POINTED TALL, THE OLD WITCH WANTS YOU WITH HER STINKING CALLIGRAPH! SHE'S COOKED UP A *SHOCKER* FOR YOU THIS TIME! BUT IF YOU



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

WEE, WEE! SO, WHO ELSE? IT'S ME AGAIN! THE OLD WITCH... MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! COME IN! MY CAULDRON IS FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH ITS EVIL BREW... AND EVEN NOW IT GUMBLER AND BUBBLER! ARE YOU READY FOR ME TO DICK OUT ANOTHER OF MY HEARIN' HELPERIES OF HORROR? GOOD! THEN TUCK YOUR SHROUDES UNDER YOUR CHINS AND I'LL BEGIN THE DELICIOUS TERROR-TIDBIT I CALL...

THAT'S A 'CROC'!



THE GATHERED CROWD STARES INTO THE PIT IN HORROR AND FASCINATION! THE NEWEST ADDITIONS TO THE TOWN 200 LAY BELOW THEM, SCARCELY MOVING... THEIR SLIMY SCALES GLISTENING IN THE MORNING SUN! FOUR HUNT, FEROCIOUS-LOOKING... GELT CROCODILES...

"DADDY! I DON'T WANT TO LOOK! THEY SCARE ME!"

"POW! LOOKA..."

"WOLLY WEE! I'LL BET THEY'RE FRIGHTENED!"



HEY! HERE COMES
THE ZOO-KEEPER!
THE ZOO-KEEPER!
BOY! I'LL BET HE'S
PROUD OF HIS NEW
CROCODILES!

YEAH! THE
CRAZY
OLD
COOBY!



HELLO, BOYS!
WELL? HOW
DO YOU LIKE
MY NEW
CHARMST?



HI, MR COOGAN!
BOY, THEY LOOK
AWFUL! MEAN!

MR COOGAN'S EYES OPEN WIDE
AS HE WHISPERS TO THE BATH-
TUBED TOURISTERS...

MEAN? THEY'RE **KILLERS!**
MAN-EATERS! DID YOU
KNOW **EIGHT MEN**
WERE **KILLED**
CAPTURING
THEM?

SEE!
BOY!

WOW!



THENSUDDENLY, MR COOGAN'S FACE GROWS SOFT.
HE SMILES AS HE STARES DOWN INTO THE BIG
CROCODILE-PIT...

BUT, NOW THEY'RE
ALL MINE! AREN'T
THEY **BEAUTIFUL?**

RIGHT ON, YEAH!
BEAUTIFUL,
MR COOGAN!

YEAH!
BOB-JOB!



MR COOGAN TAKES ONE LONG WISTFUL LOOK AT
THE NEWLY ARRIVED REPTILES. SMILES. THEN
MOVES OFF TO HIS OTHER CHARGE! THE KIDS
WATCH HIM GO.

BOY! HIS BECOMING
SURE FINE! **CRAZY**
COOGAN!

YOU SAID IT! HE'S
NUTS! HE'S NOT
THIS! AREN'T THEY
BEYOO-BEE-FUL?

HAW, HAW!
YEAH,
CRAZY!
REAL
BEAT-
LOOKIN'!



THE WHOLELINEBOYS DRIFT OFF DOWN THE PATH
LAUGHING AND JOKING ABOUT MR. COOGAN, THE ZOO-
KEEPER! THAT EVENING, AFTER THE CROWD HAS
GONE AND THE ZOO-GATE IS CLOSED, MR COOGAN
GOES TO THE CROCODILE-PIT! HE SMILES DOWN AT THE
REPTILES.

BEAUTIFUL, **BEAUTIFUL CROCODILES!** I'M
GOING TO TAKE **SUCH GOOD CARE** OF YOU. THE
FOUR OF YOU! I'M YOUR FRIEND!



THEN MR COOGAN DISAPPEARS INTO ONE OF
THE ZOO BUILDINGS! SOON HE RETURNS WITH
A PLATTER OF MEAT! HE BENDS OVER THE
PIT, TOSING THE MEAT IN...



HERE YOU ARE... MY FRIENDS!
HERE'S YOUR **SUPPER!**
NICE FRESH MEAT.

A FEW DAYS LATER, ONE OF THE TOWNSMEN VISITS THE
TODD HE FINDS MR COOPER SITTING ON THE EDGE OF THE
PIT, STARED DIRECTLY DOWN AT THE FOUR-SHIRT
MURDERER.

WHETHER WE COULDN'T
YOU LOOK UNHAPPY!
I AM, BECAUSE IT'S MY CROCODILES!
THEY REFUSE TO EAT ANYTHING!
I'M WORRYING ABOUT THEM!

WEE, MY COUSIN? I DON'T KNOW! LOOK AT
WHAT DO YOU THINK THEM? THEY LOOK
FEARFUL IF THEY

BOULT, MR COOPER: I DON'T
MAYBE THEY DON'T SEE WHY
LIKE WHAT YOU NOT?
FEEL THEM? I...

THE LITTLE BOY TURNS TO GO
AS HE STANDS AWAY, HE SMILES
AND SINGS—

AFTER ALL, MR. COOKMAN, THAT
YOU HAD YOURSELF
THEY'RE MAN-
EATERS?

MR. COCHRAN STARES AFTER THE CHILD AS HE LEAVES THE TOILET. THEN HE TURNS AND DAZZLED LOOKS INTO THE PIT AT ITS SLIMY COORRANTS.

THAT'S IF PAUL'S
WANTS SPONSOR THEY'RE
MILITARYS

'CRABBY DOOGAN' LOOKS AROUND THE DOG IS ORIENTED. HE SENDS OVER THE PUT AND WHI-
PERS DOWN TO THE FOUR PERSONS AROUND THE

DON'T WORRY, MY FRIENDS. I PROMISED TO TAKE CARE OF YOU! AND I WILL.

THAT NIGHT, ON A DARK EMPTY STREET IN TOWN, A SHADOWY FIGURE LURKS IN AN ALLEYWAY UP THE BLOCK, AN UNEXPECTED WAR WAGED HIS WAY TOWARD IT.

LATER, "CRAZY COOSAN" SITS ON THE EDGE OF THE CROCODILE-PIT SMILING DOWN AT THE SORROWING REPTILES...



EAT, MY FRIENDS! EAT HEARTILY!

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW, THE CROCODILES BECOME MORE ACTIVE! THEY MOVE ABOUT THE PIT, EATING THE CURIOUS ONLOOKERS THAT LEAN OVER THE EDGE TO VIEW THEM! FROM TIME TO TIME, ONE OF THE REPTILES OPENS ITS BAPING, DRIPPING JAWS WEIGHORLY...



GOOON, LOON!

LOOKA THEM FEETH!

WOY I'D HATE TO BE DOWN THERE...

EVEN MR. COOSAN WATCHES THEM FROGLY...



HEY, MR. COOSAN! YOUR CROCODILES LOOK ALL RIGHT! THEY MUST BE EATING NOW, HUN?

YES, M'BOY! THEY'RE EATING FINE, NOW!

MEANWHILE, IN TOWN, AT THE HOME OF ONE NORMAN SIMMS...



YOU SAY MY BROTHER NORMAN HAS LEFT YOU DAME?

SOR, YES, ED! HE HAIN'T BEEN HOME FOR THREE DAYS NOW! HE WENT OUT A FEW NIGHTS AGO AND JUST DISAPPEARED...

ONE NIGHT, ABOUT A WEEK LATER, "CRAZY COOSAN" STANDS ALONE AT THE CROCODILE PIT...



YOU HAVEN'T BEEN EATING, FRIENDS! I'M WORRIED! HAH! I SWEAR I'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU ONCE MORE!

AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, IN TOWN, A BRAGGARTY FIGURE LURKS IN AN ALLEY ON A DESERTED STREET... AWAITING A VICTIM.



AH? HERE COMES SOMEONE NOW! ANOTHER MEAL FOR MY MAN-EATERS!

AND LATER THAT NIGHT, AS THE MOON SHEDS ITS COLD, EERE LIGHT OVER THE TOO-BROODING...



SEE? LET I TOLD YOU I WOULD TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU, MY CROCODILES!

MEANWHILE, ED SWIN SEARCHES FOR HIS BROTHER, NORMAN, WHO HAS VANISHED INTO THIN AIR.

YEAH, ED? NORM WAS *HERE* THAT NIGHT! LEFT ABOUT TEN. I SHOULD SAY! HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE!



THE NEXT DAY, ED VISITS DANE HIS SISTER-IN-LAW...

YOU'D BETTER REPORT THIS TO THE POLICE, DANE? I CAN'T LOCATE NORMAN!

NO, ED? THERE'D BE A *SCANDAL*! I'LL WAIT A WHILE



WHILE AT THE ZOO...

BOY, MR COOGAN! YOUR MAN-EATERS LOOK *AWFUL PERVERSIOUS* TODAY.

THEY *ARE* ACTIVE. AREN'T THEY? I'M SO GLAD THEY'RE HAPPY!



SEE! THEIR PIT'S *AWFUL DIRTY*. MR COOGAN? DON'T YOU *CLEAN* IT?

WELL, AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE CAGE CLEANERS ARE GOING TO DO IT *THIS AFTERNOON*!



THAT AFTERNOON, A LARGE FENCE IS LOWERED INTO THE CROCODILE PIT, ENCLOSEDING THE REPTILES ON ONE SIDE? THEN THE CAGE CLEANERS DESCEND LADDER AND BEGIN CLEANING THE FILTHY HALF.

DO A *GOOD JOB*, LOU! THESE ARE MY *FAVORITES*!

SURE THING, MR COOGAN!



ONE OF THE CAGE CLEANERS SPOTS A SHINY OBJECT LYING ON THE PIT FLOOR.

HEMM! LOOKS LIKE *SOMEONE* DROPPED HIS *SHOE* INTO THE PIT! OH, WELL! *FINDERS KEEPERS!*



AFTER THE FIRST HALF OF THE PIT IS CLEANED, THE FENCE IS RAISED? THE CROCODILES ARE DRIVEN TO THE CLEAN SIDE OF THE PIT AND THE FENCE IS LOWERED? THEN THE CAGE CLEANERS DESCEND *ONCE MORE*.

OKAY, MR COOGAN? HOW'S IT LOOK?

FINE! *JUST FINE!* THANK YOU, LOU!



THAT NIGHT, OLD 'CRAZY COOGAN' SITS ON THE PIT EDGE, SMILING DOWN AT HIS FRIENDS

I'VE TREATED YOU WELL, MY FRIENDS, HAVEN'T I? I'VE LOOKED AFTER YOU! YOU KNOW ME... DON'T YOU?

WHILE FAR ACROSS TOWN...

I TELL YOU, SAM, IT'S NOT WE STOMPED! NORM WAS ALWAYS A GOOD HUSBAND TO HAVE, BUT LEAP-ING HER LIKE THIS!

YEAH, ED? YOU KNOW, THERE MUST BE AN EPIDEMIC! JACK DILBY'S WIFE'S LOOKIN' FOR HIM, TOO!

NO KIDDIN' HE DISAPPEAR, TOO? SAY! THERE'S SOMETHING SIGHTY STRANGE GOIN' ON!

SURE'S A BEEA, SAM!

OH, HE LNU! HOW'S THE CASE-CLEAN-ING COMIN'?

PRETTY FAIR! HAD A TOUNG ONE TODAY.

HEY!

WHERE'D YOU GET THAT RING? THAT'S NORMAN'S RING!

WHY, I FOUND IT!

DON'T LIE TO ME! YOU KNOW WHERE HE IS! TELL ME, BEFORE I BREAK YOU IN TWO!

HONEST, EN? I FOUND THE RING! IN THE DROO DILE PIT! WE CLEANED IT THIS AFTERNOON! 'CRAZY COOGAN'

'CRAZY COOGAN'? DILBY! DO... DO YOU SUPPOSE...?

JACK DILBY'S MISSING, TOO!

'WHY? LET'S GO! LET'S TALK TO COOGAN...

AS THE ANGRY MEN FROM THE BAR ENTER THE ZOO GROUNDS...

LOOK! COOCHAN'S UP AHEAD!

HE'S CARRYING SOMETHING!

A BODY?



HE'S HEADED FOR THE CROCODILE-PIT!

COOCHAN! CRAZY COOCHAN!

HUH?



THE STARTLED ZOO-KEEPER DROPS HIS LATEST VICTIM AND BEGINS TO RUN! THE TOWNSMEN ARE CLOSE ON HIS HEELS...

NO USE TRYIN' TO GET AWAY, 'CRASY'! WE'LL GET YOU!

NO YOU WON'T! NO YOU WON'T...



MR. COOCHAN RUSHES UP TO THE CROCODILE-PIT...

MY CROCODILES! THEY'LL TAKE CARE OF ME! THEY'LL PROTECT ME! THEY LOVE ME...

COOCHAN! DON'T!



'CRAZY COOCHAN' CLIMBS TO THE EDGE OF THE CROCODILE PIT... HESITATES FOR A MINUTE... THEN LEAPS IN...

HE... HE JUMPED!

HE'S... MAD!



THE HORRIFIED MEN RUSH UP TO THE PIT-EDGE AND STARE DOWN! THE FEROCIOUS CROCODILES ARE THRASHING ABOUT... RIPPING AND TEARING! FROM THEIR VICTIM COME THE BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAMS OF DEATH...

OUCH!

GOOD LORD!

HOW... HOW HORRIBLE!



HEY, HEY! WELL, REESES? THAT'S MY STORY! DID 'CRAZY COOCHAN'S' FRIENDS DID THIS CASE OF HIM - VERY WELL! WHICH REMINDS ME! PERHAPS YOU KNOW OF A ZOO THAT'S LOOKING FOR SOME MAN-EATING CROCODILES? I KNOW WHERE THERE ARE SOME FOR SALE... CHEAP, TOO! ONLY ONE THING! THEY'RE MIGHTY HUNGRY! THEY HAVEN'T EATEN ANYTHING SINCE COOCHAN! AND NOW, TURN TO THE PAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER! HE'LL TELL YOU HOW TO GET BACK ISSUES FROM US GHOULNATION...





THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Soper

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear Vault-Keeper:

Issues 7 and 8 of VAULT were great! Both of your stories in VAULT #7 ("Sick Hotel" and "The Mask of Horror") were terrific. I've recently subscribed to VAULT and I am wondering if there are any zombie stories coming up, zombie stories are my favorite kind of stories.

I thought Johnny Craig's art on the covers of VAULT 7 and 8 was great. Are there any Vault-Keeper collectibles out there? Sincerely yours,

Corey Dohak

West Hartford, CT

I don't read another zombie story until issue #17, but it makes you feel better there's about a (B)ton revived-zombie stories between now and then! You'd think a Screamwriter who delivers the goods like that rates a figurine—and will, in January! —VS

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I absolutely love your stories. I'm ten years old. I was wondering if you would send me a personalized picture of yourself?

Tanner Boston

Boston, MA

Hope,

—VS

Dear Vault-Keeper:

I love your comics the most, but I also like CRYPT, HAUNT and SHOCK. I have one question. I watch the Tales from the Crypt show on TV and I wanted to know if The Vault-Keeper uses some of your stories, because in VAULT 5 you had a story called "Pitting Punishment" and about two weeks ago that story was on TV.

Catherine Anthony

Groesbeek, NJ

Ha, ha! That old Crypt-Creep is caught with his pants down! Yes, he stole from me, The Old Witch, and even from the Suspensory titles, SHOCK and CRYPT. —VS

Hi WD!

My name is James and I live in a boring, sweltering dust bowl where the only excitement found is in your mag! Please brighten my life and give me a response. It would be exciting to hear from a (Shout,write), which I agree to be someday. Maybe you can give me some pointers.

By the way, WD not to bring up that tooth head, OK, but how come you can't fill in for him on the show every once in a while? Give his sorry tale a rest for a while, and give the viewers an even better reason to watch.

Ghoulishistic wannabe

James Fan

Orem, UT, OK

Trade in that Oklahoma dust for MUMMY dust, and you're on your way! I tried to fill in for OK once, but went into the wrong studio, wound up on "5-Flax" — (he she even relieved) —VS

Dear Vault-Keeper:

It's great to see the evolution of horror in VAULT #9 was just what my sister (Bambino) ordered. I really enjoyed the late Johnny Craig cover and his last story

"About Face!" The Davis story, "The Reluctant Vampire" was sad. I sat sorry for her! (Drink—what a way to get a medal. The Karen and Ingale stories were also top-notch.

EC readers may be interested in "The Monster Show," a new book (1993) by David J. Skal. He calls EC "the most influential and imitated (but not the most numerous)" horror comic.

Skal also mentions that "the leading foe of horror comics was Dr. Frederic Wertham, a Germany Park psychiatrist who, coincidentally had been imported to America from Germany about the same time as 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' in the early twenties." He goes on to compare Wertham with the vampire Hysteria, which is appropriate since, in a sense, Wertham helped suck the life out of the horror books. I find it ironic that although Dr. Wertham no longer walks among us, EC lives on. Your reprints are the best! Thanks again.

David C. Geln

Tacoma, WA

Here, now! Let's not be badmouthing Caligari and Hysteria! —VS

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I think you're the best! VAULT #8 was the best, especially "Requiem." It was the best. Compared to those other two guys you're the best.

Ray Taylor, age 11

Worms, IL

[GUY] Haggini

—OW

Dear Russ Cochran:

I just wanted to take the time out and thank you for resubmitting comic books worth reading. You printed them at a time in my life when I was searching for the right comic book that was old fashioned fun. Thank you again.

Jana Bultmann

Columbia, OH

And when it comes to fashionable fun, no one's older than I am—well, that's not quite what I meant! —VS

Dear VS,

I just bought VAULT #9 and I have to say that I LOVE your comic books! You are MUCH better than OK, and OW (though I must admit I read their comic books, too). Do you come up with the ideas for your stories yourself, or do you have other people do it for you?

Also, please include my address, because I would really love to have a horror and/or comic book fan pen pal (I'm really into both). I'm 18. Your ghoulish friend.

Molly Jarrell

1418 Independence OH 43030

Emporia, VA 22847

I admit to using a Dictaphone, but other than that, what you get is straight from the horse's mouth. In the cases of OW and OK, well, let's just say it's straight from somewhere else. —VS

NEXT
ISSUE



More items of general EC interest, collected into this special column called...

FAN CLUB NEWS! as PRESENTED BY THE GUILD-MASTER

Melrose segment: "The Gray Cloud of Death" (WB) is lost just cross from the Venue 2 to the Venue 1. There is a long flash-back, and—the guy in the green space suit is never seen again. The gray cloud got him! I guess about no one else even notices he is gone. "Voodoo Death" (CRYPT 7), again (and), there is no such island as Haiti (it's an independent nation occupying about the western fourth of the island of Hispaniola; the rest is taken up by the Dominican Republic. "Hounded to Death" (HAUNT 8); so the pudgy middle-aged husband dragged the alleged dead guy (friend of?) and hung him over a fence higher than his head? Oh, yeah. I'm sure.

As for "The Raven" I don't necessarily see that my interpretation invalidates any previous ones. I am sorry to say I missed Poe's own explanation of it but am not surprised it should be tortuous, because to me it is clear the whole poem was meant as a burlesque from the start. The real argument, I think, depends not on Dorian or Sustenia, but (as we) comment about the recent symbolism as medieval art, and those same artists (Bosch, e.g.) used the owl not as a symbol of wisdom as we now think it but as an evil omen. So symbols change and sometimes, those that use them change them. So pounce on the grates due to Mark Bernstein.

"The Very Strange Mummy" (HAUNT 8) deserves a certain notoriety, too. How can you top the autopsy of a mummy mummy??

Dave Hall

Seattle, WA

How about the shupaph of a Grew Hall, for starters! —VE

Please. Reading through the lettercolumns, I'd have to agree with John Miller's comments about the diversity in the science-fiction comics. The EC titles produced some memorable characters and while I've never read the Creation ones, I think I can say with some measure of truth that the ECs were the most joyful. After all, some (serious) subconsciously didn't ban any words from those companies' titles! Those people, thinking "Weird" was offensive. If only they knew that the word would become a part of American lingo and later! Along about 1965 years later. As for the EC sci-fi books, they still seemed to rank of the superhero touch. Now I just wonder what would have happened if Bill Gaines tackled the superhero genre, we might have had Inferno: pulp-driven good guys thirty years earlier!

Thanks for your time and keep up the good work, but with a new juicy name like Gladstone, why don't we see a logo on the front cover? C'mon!

Joey Marchese

Clark, NJ

We want to do the absolute minimum in altering the EC covers; we feel a new telephone would be going too far. (Hey, Ed, what's a telephone?) —VE

Dear Russ,

I read a reprint of something you wrote a while ago, saying you wished you'd kept your old battered written-on, original ECs (because in their way they were better than most copies). I promptly stopped a year-old "up-grade" of my collection and am glad I did.

Russ: just between you and me, here are some facts: since you printed my first letter I have received 84 applications for the EC REGISTER, of which 36 eventually sent in \$5 subscriptions to GOOOO LORD! I've gotten out three issues and am especially proud of the last one.

As you have seen, GOOOO LORD! is 99% reader input, with a heavy slant toward collectors and collecting, rather than critique-ing and analyzing EC stories, a field well covered in your great mag.

Anyone may join the EC REGISTER by sending a stamp. New members will receive the latest issue of GOOOO LORD!, our INCREDIBLE new forum/newsletter (our FOURTH big job is about to appear!) or better yet, send \$7.00 right now for a one-year (four-issue) subscription. Lifetime membership in the EC REGISTER is absolutely free, just send a stamp to Above Top Productions, 5801 Atlantic Avenue, Margate City, New Jersey, 08402, for info.

Christopher Cook Gilmore

Dear CRYPTICALLY HAUNT

Thanks for your fantastic new reprints. I collect all the horror, science and thriller issues. No mean feat considering how hard they are to obtain here in England.

Anyway, on to the main point of my letter: recently while reading a guide to world comics, I came across a chapter on 3D comics of years past and a couple of lines about an EC comic called THREE DIMENSIONAL E.C. CLASSICS, and a follow up THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT. Both issued around late 53-early 54. Could you please tell me more about the above two comics and their contents as I have never heard you mention them before and is there any chance of re-printing them?

Bill Harris

Cumtula, OR

I answered some of your questions in "News" #6 (see HAUNT #8, et al), as to the contents, they had already published EC stories in them—some cautions say "redrawn" but my memory is the art was based on the 3D version and the additional layers for depth were fresh "redrawings." A lot of work, Jack! —VE

Dear Russ,

Aha! Tracked you down! Greeting! You might not remember me but I wrote you once at Gladstone regarding the good "headlights" you had put on some Danny (?) character. (What was her name? Melissa? Miranda? Well something like that.)

So why am I writing? Just to say hello and wish you luck. I see you have taken over the (formerly) Gladstone line of horror and science fiction comics. (That's how I found out your address.) Hope the new endeavor is working out.

By the way, as a kid I mostly read Danny and Little Lulu comics. I especially loved the works of Carl Barks, but like so many at the time, did not know his name. Once in a while I would get hold of a Superman or Batman comic. I liked these OK, but generally saved my money for the Barks and Lulu. Very rarely would I read a horror comic in those days. I am not sure whether I really disliked them per se, or whether I was influenced by the prevailing opinion that only bad or sick boys read them.

So what do you think? Were we they bad for young kids? It seems improbable in view of some of the things kids see out on TV, but then maybe both are bad? (Getting conservative in my old age?) So what do you think?

Valerie Demoychuk

South Pasadena, CA

I'll rock your horror comics up against terrorism and smokin' pictures anytime! And come up smiling, like a idiot! For the match thereof! Hah, hah! —CK

Back off, formidablehydrobreath! You're too potent! Just a...pony! Hah! —VE

Write to this department like so: FAN CLUB NEWS, RUSS COCHRAN, POB 488, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775.

The appearance of names in comments does not signify endorsement or approval by the editor. The editor, however, reserves the right to delete, condense and reword comments. Comments are not published if they contain obscenity, libel, or other material that would reflect unfavorably on the magazine or its publisher. Writers are asked to keep comments on the magazine brief.

EVER BEEN CHASED AWAY FROM IN FRONT
OF THAT MEAN OLD GRABBY GUY'S HOUSE
DOWN THE BLOCK? HERE'S WHAT ONE BUNCH
OF KIDS DID ABOUT IT! I CALL THIS CHILLER...

CHILD'S PLAY



A SLIGHT BREEZE WHIPPED ALONG THE SUN-BAKED
STREET CARRYING WITH IT THE SHOUTS AND YELLS
OF A GROUP OF SMALL BOYS ENAGED IN ANOTHER
GAME OF TOUGH-TACKLE...THE PAVEMENT VERSION
OF FOOTBALL...



SUDDENLY THE HIGH-PITCHED CRIES OF THE YOUNG
STERS DIED! THE GAME CAME TO AN ABRUPT HALT!
AN ANGRY FACED MAN STOOD AT THE CURB, SHAK-
ING HIS FIST AT THE SMALL WIDE EYED PAGES...







MR. COLLINS DISAPPEARED INTO THE HOUSE WITH THE CREDENT A KICK FOOTBALL.

HE, HE TOOK IT! HE WON'T TELL US! WE WON'T TELL HIM! HE'S GOT HIS OWN SECRET HOME!

THE DUTTY RAT!



THE EAG-FACED YOUNGSTER'S HANDS ABOARD OUTSIDE THE COLLINS' HOUSE. HELPLESS! AFTER AN HOUR OR SO, THE FRONT DOOR OPENED AND MRS. COLLINS CAME OUT! SHE HAD THE FOOTBALL.

WHY? HE'S ASLEEP! HERE! HERE'S YOUR FOOTBALL!

SEE, MRS. COLLINS! THANKS!

YOU'RE SUPER!



DON! MILDON! YOU STARTLED ME!

YOU HAVE IT BACK, DON'T YOU, EMMA? DIDN'T YOU?



MILDON COLLINS SWUNG OUT, DARINGLY STARRING HIS WIFE ACROSS THE FACE.

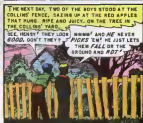
OWWWW!

MAYBE THIS WILL TEACH YOU TO MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS!



SURE IS A WASTE, HUH? BUT THEY TASTE SCUMPTIOUS!

I'LL TELL YOU FOR WHO GOES IN AND SWIPES A COUPLE!



THE NEXT DAY, TWO OF THE BOYS STOOD AT THE COLLINS' FENCE, SIZING UP AT THE RED APPLE THAT HUNG, RIPE AND JUICY, ON THE TREE IN THE COLLINS' YARD.

SEE, HENRY! THEY LOOK GOOD, DON'T THEY?

WHEW! AND HE NEVER PICKS 'EM! HE JUST LETS THEM FALL ON THE GROUND AND ROT!



THE BOTTLE TOP FLIPPED UP INTO THE COOL SUMMER AIR AND CAME DOWN! HENRY'S FACE FELL! HE'D LOST! HE MOVED TO THE GATE CAUTIOUSLY.

YOU EING OUT IF YOU SEE HIM, HUH, JIMMY?

DON'T WORRY, HENRY! GO AHEAD! DON'T BE FELLOW!

HENRY LIFTED THE LATCH AND THE GATE CREAKED OPEN! HE TIP-TOED TO THE TREE AND LOOKED UP! THE APPLES HUNG TEMPTINGLY ABOVE HIS OUTSTRETCHED HANDS...



SEE IF THERE'S A STICK AROUND!

HENRY BEGAN TO HUNT AROUND THE YARD FOR A STICK TO KNOCK THE APPLES DOWN WITH! SUDDENLY JIMMY SHOUTED IN ORBIT...



IT WAS OLD GRABBY MR. COLLINS! HE BLAMED DOWN AT THE FRIGHTENED LITTLE BOY...



MR. COLLINS UNBUCKLED HIS BELT AND SLID IT OUT FROM THE TROUSER LOOPS...



MR. COLLINS RAISED THE LEATHER STRAP! HENRY BEGAN TO CRY! SUDDENLY EMMA COLLINS RAN OUT FROM THE HOUSE...



HENRY SPRANG OUT OF THE YARD! MR. COLLINS SCREAMED AFTER HIM...



THEN MR. COLLINS SPUN AROUND, FACING HIS WIFE! HIS FACE WAS FLUSHED WITH ANGER! HIS EYEBROWS AHOE EXPLODED...



HENRY AND JIMMY STOPPED RUNNING AND TURNED AT THE PATHETIC SIGH OF PAIN.



AFTER MR. COLLINS HAD DISAPPEARED, THE BOYS BRISKLY APPROACHED THE COLLINS' HOUSE? CAUTIOUSLY, THEY OPENED THE BIG SAFE AND MOVED UP THE WALK TO THE FRONT DOOR? A NERVOUS FINGER FINALLY PRESSED THE DOORBELL. HEAVY FOOTSTEPS WERE HEARD? THEN THE DOOR OPENED AND A RED-EYED OLD WOMAN BLANCED OUT.



THE NEXT DAY, AS MR. COLLINS LEFT HIS HOUSE FOR TOWN, MANY PAIRS OF EYES WATCHED HIM GO.



FROM THEIR HIDING PLACES BEHIND THE GRAVESTONES, THE MEMBERS OF THE CRESCENT A.C. WATCHED MRS. COLLINS' FUNERAL. WATCHED GRIM-FACED MR. COLLINS AND THE RED-EYED OLD LADY WHO WAS MRS. COLLINS' MOTHER.



THE MOURNERS LEFT THE GRAVE! THE GRAVE-DIGGER MOVED FORWARD AND BEGAN TO MOVE THE DIRT INTO THE SIPPING HOLE! THE BOYS WATCHED IN FASCINATION.



HEY! I GOT AN IDEA! BOY THIS COULD SCARE THE PANTS OFF MR. COLLINS!

WHAT IS IT?

C'MON, HENRY! RYSE OUT!



HENRY OUTLINED HIS PLAN.



THAT NIGHT, AN CRABBY OLD MR COLLINS SAT ALONE ON HIS BACK PORCH, PUFFING HIS PIPE AND BLOWING THE SMOKE OUT INTO THE DARKNESS. A MOVEMENT IN THE SHADOWS CAUGHT HIS EYE...

WHO...WHO'S THERE?

A WHILING HIGH-PITCHED VOICE DRIFTED OVER THE STILL NIGHT AIR...

IT...IS...I...MILTON? EMMA...YOUR WIFE'S HAVE...COME BACK...TO AVENGE...MY...MURDER...

WHO IS IT? I...I CAN'T SEE YOU!

MILTON COLLINS STARED INTO THE DARKNESS? SUDDENLY HE GASPED? A FILMY WHITE APPARITION FLOATED OUT OF THE BLACK...ACROSS THE YARD...TOWARD HIM...

WHY...DID YOU...KILL...MR...MILTON?

EMMA? NO! NO! I CAN'T SEE!

MR. COLLINS STRUGGLED TO HIS FEET...HIS EYES WIDE IN HORROR! THE COLOR DRAINED FROM HIS FACE AS THE WHITE GHOSTLY THING CAME NEAR...

I'M SORRY, EMMA! I'M SORRY I KILLED YOU! PLEASE, EMMA! PLEASE...I...I...OHMYGOD!

MR. COLLINS PITCHED FORWARD AND FELL FACE DOWNWARD ON THE BACK YARD DIRT? SUDDENLY A HOLE OPENED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GHOSTLY FIGURE AND A FACE PEERED OUT...

HEY! MR. COLLINS! IT...IT'S JUST A RAT! IT'S ME! HEY!

OTHER TERRIFIED BOYS APPEARED. SOMEONE STOPPED THE SHEET FROM WHERE IT HAD HUNG OVER THE BALLOON ON THE STICKED TO HENRY'S BACK? ANOTHER BOY AND EXAMINED MR. COLLINS...

HE...HE'S...HE...WE SCARED DEAD? HIM TO DEATH?

YEAH, YEAH! NO YOU DIDN'T, KID! NOT REALLY! IT WAS EMMA'S GHOST! THAT DID IT! EMMA'S GHOST! AND MR. COLLINS' CONSCIENCE! FOR YOU SEE, MR. COLLINS DID MURDER HIS WIFE! IT WAS A LIGHT MURDER, WASN'T IT? OR WAS IT A MURDER? WHEN DID HENRY FIRST THINK OF MURDER? OH, YEAH! IT WAS AT EMMA'S FUNERAL! HMM? AND IF YOU, DEAR

READER, WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND A FUNERAL, JUST SEND FOR MY BACK ISSUE! ONE LOOK WILL BE ENOUGH! THE FUNERAL WILL BE TERRIFIC! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE GRIFF-KEEPER!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! WELL! NOW... FINALLY! IT'S MY TURN TO ENTERTAIN YOU! IF YOU CAN STILL MOVE, COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! I AM YOUR HOST! THE CRYPT-KEEPER! SO YOU HAVEN'T HAD ENOUGH HORROR, EH? WELL, I'LL FIX THAT THIS TIME I'VE CHOSEN... FROM MY BEST COLLECTION OF TERROR TALES... ONE THAT I'M SURE YOU'LL ENJOY! I CALL THIS SHUDDER TALE...

TRAPPED!



MARTY ROLLED OVER AND OPENED HIS EYES! HE LOOKED OUT OF THE PASSENGER-CAR DOOR AT THE DARK COUNTRY-SIDE SLIPPING BY! THE STEADY CLACK-CLACK OF THE WHEELS ROARED IN HIS EARS! SUDDENLY HE HEARD A VOICE! HE REACHED FOR THE LITTLE BLACK BAG INSTINCTIVELY.

WHO... WHO'S THERE?

I HOPPED ABOARD AT ASH-
VILLE, STRANGER! YOU WERE
ASLEEP! I DIDN'T WANT TO
DISTURB YOU!



MARTY CLUTCHED THE BLACK BAG AND STOOD THE RENDEZVOUS OUTSIDE. THE TRAIN WHISTLE BOOMED INTO THE NIGHT.

THE SHABBY DRESSED MAN CALLED HARRISON GOT TO HIS FEET AND STOOD BAKING OUT OF THE SPEEDING FREIGHT-CAR.

SEE THEM MOUNTAINS? **BAD** THERE'S THE **SHADOFF** COUNTRY. THAT'S OLD **BALOF** OUT THERE! THIS HERE'S **BAD** COUNTRY!

MY NAME'S HARRISON, STRANGER. **BAD** HARRISON? WHAT'S YOURS?

OKAY, STRANGER! NO HARM! I WAS JUST TRYIN' TO BE FRIENDLY!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



HARRISON WAIVED HIS ARM TOWARD THE BLACK MOUNTAINS SLIPPING BY...

THE RAGGED STRANGER STARED AT MARTY HIS EYES WIDE.

THIS HERE'S **HAUNTED** COUNTRY! NOBODY LIVES AROUND HERE! THE LAND'S **BEMITCHED**... **CURSED**...

I **KNOW** THESE PARTS, MISTER! LISTEN! **WHAT** WAS THAT?



THE DULL THUDING OF FOOTSTEPS ON THE ROOF OF THE FREIGHT BOOMED THROUGH THE CAR! THE MAN NAMED HARRISON LEANED OUT OF THE OPEN DOORWAY, LOOKED UP, THEN DUCKED BACK INSIDE, BREATHING HARD.

AS THE TRAIN WHISTLE WHINED INTO THE NIGHT, TWO SHADDOY FIGURES LEAPED FROM THE SPEEDING FREIGHT.

IT'S A **RAIL ROAD** SIGHT!

HEY, FOU TWO.



MARTY COVERED THE OLD MAN'S BODY WITH A TARPULIN! THEN HE FELL EXHAUSTED INTO A RICKETY CHAIR! THE CLIMB UP THE MOUNTAIN HAD BEEN TRYING! SUDDENLY A BUZZING FLY BEGAN TO ORBIT HIS HEAD...

SHOO, BLASTED BUG!

THE INSISTANT FLY CONTINUED TO ANNOY MARTY, GROWING ABOUT ESCAPING HIS WILD SWIRLS.

WHA? POP? I'LL REACH FOR TO OTHER MARTY KINGS!

MARTY SPRUNG OUT AT THE DINING FLY WITH HIS PREVIOUS SLASH SAFENEL... NARROWLY MISSING IT AS IT LAUNCHED ON THE TABLE! THE CAB SPRUNG OPEN AND HUNDREDS OF RECTANGULAR BOTTLE BELLS FLOATED TO THE FLOOR.

LOSER! JAW! NOW LOOK WHAT YOU'VE MADE ME DO!

MARTY GOT VERY LITTLE SLEEP THAT NIGHT! THE FLY CONTINUED TO BUZZ ABOUT THE CABIN, ANNOYING HIM UNTIL DAWN CAME! AS THE SUN ROSE OVER THE MOUNTAINS, AND THE MIST STILL HUNG THICK IN THE LOW PLACES, MARTY DROBBED THE OLD MAN'S BODY OUT TO BURY IT.

THERE YOU ARE, YOU OLD BEEZEE! A NICE DEEP HOLE IN YOUR LOVIN' LAND TO SLEEP IN.

AS HE SHOVELLED THE SOFT BLACK DIRT DOWN INTO THE HOLE, COVERING THE OLD MAN, MARTY SPUN AROUND! THE BUZZING FLY HAD RETURNED! IT HUNG ABOUT HIS HEAD! MARTY SHRIED AT IT UNBELIEVABLY! FINALLY THE HOLE WAS FILLED! MARTY SCREAMED AT THE ANNOYING INSECT.

GET AWAY FROM ME, YOU CURSED FLY...

MARTY'S MYSTERICAL SHRIEDS ECHOED OVER THE DESERTED COUNTRYSIDE. BACK AND FORTH! HE SHIVERED AT THE SOUND OF HIS OWN VOICE.

GOT TO GET AWAY OF MYSELF! I'M ALL ON EDGE! IMAGINE... A LITTLE FLY GETTIN' THE BEST OF ME.

THEN MARTY BEGAN TO EXPLORE THE CRUDE FARM. HE HAD COMMANDERED OFF IN THE VALLEY, A SHREDDER STUNNED, DRIFTED UP THE MOUNTAIN, AND WHISTLED THROUGH THE PINES! SUDDENLY... AS MARTY STOOD GAZING UP AT ONE OF THE POWERFUL TREES...

WHAT THE...?

RACK

THE MERE TREE CAME CRASHING DOWN WITH AN EARSPLITTING ROAR, NARROWLY MISSING THE HORRIFIED MARTY.



GOOD LORD!

MARTY SCRAMBLED BACK INTO THE CABIN! HE LEANED AGAINST THE DOOR PANTING...



IT...IT'S CURSED! HARRISON WAS RIGHT! THE LAND'S HAUNTED! I...I'M SCARED...

SUDDENLY, THE DROWNING BEGAN AGAIN! THE DIBBLES HUM OF THE FLY.



WHAT THE...? YOU BACK? YOU BACK TO TORMENT ME, FOOL?

MARTY RUSHED TO THE CRUDE WOODEN CABINETS AND FLOORS THEN OPEN! HE FUMBLE ABOUT BEHIND THEM, LOOKING, SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING...



I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM THIS PLACE! IT'S HAUNTED! BUT FIRST, FIRST I'M GOING TO TAKE CARE OF YOU... YOU BLASTED FLY!

SUDDENLY, MARTY FOUND WHAT HE WAS HUNTING FOR! HE HELD IT IN HIS HAND! A SMALL ROUND CARLEBARD CYLINDER.



HEH, HEH! NOW I'LL GET YOU! YOU ~~ROTTER~~ ~~SHUT~~ I'LL MAKE YOU SUFFER AS YOU'VE MADE ME SUFFER.

MARTY TOOK HOLD OF THE STRING THAT HUNG FROM ONE END OF THE CYLINDER! HE PULLED IT! A STRIP OF PAPER UNCOILED FROM IT... SWEET, SWEET SMELLING PAPER, STICKY FLY PAPER.



AWW, LITTLE FLY! COME CLOSER... NOW!

THE IRRESISTIBLE INSECT BUZZED AROUND THE PAPER ATTRACTED BY ITS FUMES! SUDDENLY IT DARTED AWAY! IT WAS TRAPPED.



HAH, HAH! I'VE FINALLY CAUGHT YOU! YOU'RE FINISHED NOW! STRUGGLE, YOU FOOL! THE MORE YOU FIGHT...THE MORE HOPELESSLY CAUGHT YOU BECOME.

MARTY'S LAUGHTER SHIFTED FROM THE CAREER! SOON THE DOOR CREAMED AND HE CAME OUT...CLUTCHING THE LITTLE BLACK BAG...



GOT TO GET AWAY FROM THIS DAMNED PLACE!
I...I...WHAT THE...?

MARTY'S FACE FELL UPON THE FRESH GRAVE OF THE OLD MAN! THE SOIL OVER IT SEEMED STRANGE...SHIMMY! MARTY APPROACHED IT...CURIOUSLY...



WHAT IS BLAZE...

MARTY HAD STEPPED ON THE SHIMMY WET EARTH OVER THE GRAVE! HIS FEET STUCK THERE! IT WAS AS IF SOMETHING WERE HOLDING THEM! HE STRUGGLED TO FREE HIMSELF...



I'M...GAAH! HELP...HELP...

AS MARTY STRUGGLED, HE PITCHED FORWARD ON HIS HANDS AND KNEES! THE PRECIOUS BLACK BAG FLEW FROM HIS GRASP! THE CLUTCHING GROUND STUCK TO HIM...LIKE THICK SLUR...



I...I CAN'T GET OUT! THE MORE I TRY, THE WORSE IT GETS ME!

A BRISLE WAFTED THROUGH THE PINES! MARTY, NOW HOPELESSLY COVERED WITH THE FOUL-SMELLING, STIMMY GOOE, BEGAN TO SCREAM...



IT...IT'S LIKE...FLY-PAPER!
AAAAAAAAAAAAAGH!

INSIDE THE HOUSE, THE TRAPPED FLY STOPPED ITS FRANTIC STRUGGLING! ITS VIBRATING WINGS...THAT HAD BEEN ORDERING A HIGH-PITCHED BUZZ RESEMBLING A SCREAM...STOPPED SINGING! IT LAY THERE...AWARE OF ITS ULTIMATE FATE...



AND OUTSIDE, THE STUFF HAD GOT- TEN INTO MARTY'S MOUTH! IT SANGED HIS SCREAMS INTO SILENCE! THE BRISLE GREN STROM- ER! IT WHISTLED THROUGH THE PINES UNTIL IT BOUNDED LIKE LAUGHTER! AND IT CARRIED WITH IT THE HUNDREDS OF LITTLE RECTANGULAR BILLS...



HEH,HEH! YEP! MARTY WAS CAUGHT IN THE GUE...BUT GOOD! DON'T YOU WORRY, KIDDEY! REMEMBER WHAT THE OLD MAN SAID BEFORE MARTY KILLED HIM! JORDYBY COMES TO THOSE PARTS! SO MARTY AND THE FLY FACE THE SAME FATE! DEATH! WELL...THAT ABOUT WINDS UP THE HAULP-KEEPER'S BOOK FOR THIS



TIME! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR...WITH MORE TERROR AND HORROR! OH...DON'T FORGET TO READ THE HAALP-KEEPER'S CORNER IN THIS ISSUE! BYE, NOW!

**HEE-HEE! I'M GOING TO DO
LIKE THESE TWO GOOFY
GHOULUNATICS, AND GET MY
OWN SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ALL
THE EC COMICS!**



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GLAD CRYPT #6



GLAD VAULT #1



GLAD VAULT #2



GLAD VAULT #3



GLAD VAULT #4



GLAD VAULT #5



GLAD VAULT #6



GLAD WEIRD #1



GLAD WEIRD #2



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TOP SECRET

THE VAULT OF HORROR



ORIGINAL EC COMICS FROM THE 1950s!

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2TH
CANADA

THE VAULT OF

HORROR

FEATURING...



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



IN THIS ISSUE, THE OLD
WITCH REVEALS THE
STARTLING REDISCOVERY
OF THE AUTHENTIC
**FRANKENSTEIN
MONSTER!**

BACK ISSUES!!

THE COMIC YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS IS PART OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL, FACSIMILE REPRINTING OF THE FAMOUS (AND INFAMOUS!) EC COMICS LINE OF THE EARLY 1950s! WE STARTED WITH THE FIRST ISSUE OF EACH TITLE AND ARE ON OUR WAY TO THE BITTER END! GET ON THE BANDWAGON, AND FILL IN THE GAPS IN YOUR COLLECTION FROM THIS BACKLIST!!



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CRYPT #3



CRYPT #4



CRYPT #5



CRYPT #6



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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEN, HEN! WELL, HERE WE ARE TOGETHER AGAIN
READY FOR ANOTHER SOJOURN INTO *ANATOMY*? I TRUST
YOU CAME WELL PREPARED, FOR THE TALE I AM
ABOUT TO SPIN IS GUARANTEED TO MAKE YOUR SKIN
CRAWL, AND YOUR HEART POUND LIKE A TRIP-HAMMER!
I FOUND THIS STORY IN MY PRIVATE COLLECTION,
BURIED DEEP IN *THE PAVLOV*? IT ALSOVER? I CALL IT

FOUNTAINS of YOUTH!



BUT KEN, IT SOUNDS LIKE A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY! I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO TRAVEL, AND

I KNOW, BUT I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA! AFTER ALL... I EILEEN.

KENNETH MARTIN, I WAS BE YOUR BIG SISTER, BUT I'M NO CHILD! I'M NOW 22 AND I HAVE A RIGHT TO LEAD MY OWN LIFE!

ALL RIGHT, EILEEN, BUT IT'S AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGMENT!

MAYBE I AM BEING DILLY, BUT I JUST WANT TO BE SURE OF YOUR SAFETY!

I KNOW, KEN, BUT I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF! DON'T WORRY!



AND SO, A FEW HOURS BEFORE NOON, EILEEN MARTIN STEPPED FROM THE PRIVATE ELEVATOR TO SUITE 2104, IN THE COLEHOUSE HOTEL.

AS ONLY A FEW GIRLS AHEAD OF HER, I HOPE I GET THE JOB!



SHE WAITED, AS ONE BY ONE THOSE AHEAD OF HER WENT INTO THE NEXT ROOM, AND ONE BY ONE RETURNED, EACH FACE WITH ITS DISAPPOINTED EXPRESSION LENT HOPE TO HER HEART!



EILEEN STEPPED THROUGH THE HURDLED DOORS INTO THE SUMPTUOUS ROOM BEYOND, SEATED ON A LUXURIOUS COUCH, HER FACE HEAVILY VEILED, HER HAIR SLOVED, WAS THE OCCUPANT OF SUITE 2104.

AS EILEEN STATED HER EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS, SHE HAD THE STRANGE FEELING THAT THE WOMAN WAS ONLY HALF LISTENING! THEN, ABRUPTLY...

I HAVE SEVERAL LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION, IF YOU...

THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY! I THINK YOU'LL DO NICELY!



GOOD MORNING! I CAME IN RESPONSE TO YOUR AD IN THE PAPER!

GOOD MORNING! COME, SIT OVER HERE WHERE I CAN SEE YOU BETTER.



SEVERAL HOURS LATER, EILEEN EXCITEDLY EXPLAINED TO MEN...

...SO YOU CAN, YES? AND SHE LANDED ME \$800 SO I COULD BUY ALL NEW CLOTHES FOR THE TRIP!

HER NAME IS MADAME DUBOIS. SHE'S REALLY A VERY FAMOUS SOCIALITE, ONE OF THE 'FOUR HUNDRED' AND SHE'S TRAVELING INCognito! THAT'S WHY SHE WEARS A HEAVY VEIL!

... SHE'S TIRED OF NEWS-PEOPLE AND AUTOGRAPH HOUNDS ALWAYS BOTHERING HER. JUST WANTS PEACE AND QUIET! I'M SO HAPPY AND THRILLED!



WELL...I GUESS I CAN'T COMPLAIN! YOU'LL BE IN GOOD HANDS, I SUPPOSE! BUT, STILL...

OH, MEN, YOU'RE A DEAR ANOTHER TO WORRY SO MUCH. BUT IT'S REALLY UNNECESSARY! I'M SURE I'LL BE FINE!



A WEEK LATER, ALL PREPARATIONS HAD BEEN MADE. EILEEN AND MADAME DUBOIS WERE ON THEIR WAY TO EUROPE.

WELL, EVERYTHING'S UNPACKED AND PUT AWAY! WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?!

NOTHING, MY DEAR! RUN ALONE AND ENJOY YOURSELF! I WANT YOU TO HAVE A GOOD TIME!



FROM THE FIRST DAY ABOARD SHIP, MADAME DUBOIS OCCUPIED HERSELF IN THEIR CABIN-SUITE AND INSISTED THAT EILEEN RELAX AND ENJOY THE CRUISE...

SHE'S SO CONSIDERATE! I'M HAVING THE TIME OF MY LIFE! IT'S ALL SO WONDERFUL!



BUT EILEEN'S PLEASURES SOON ENDED AS A SUDDEN RIGID STRUCK WITH TERRIFIC FORCE! THE SHIP BOBBED AND TOSSED WITH THE SEA'S FURY...

OH-HO-HO, MADAME DUBOIS... I THINK I'M GETTING SEASICK!

YOU POOR DEAR! COME...LIE DOWN! I'LL CALL THE SHIP'S DOCTOR!





FOR THREE DAYS, MAGAME GUBOIS REMAINED BY EILEEN'S SIDE, DOING EVERYTHING SHE COULD TO SOOTHE, TO COMFORT HER...



THE NEXT DAY FOUND EILEEN MUCH WORSE. HER SKIN WAS WRINKLED AND HER CHEEKS HOLLOWED. HER ENTIRE BODY LOOKED AGED AND WITHERED. THROUGH IT ALL, MAGAME GUBOIS CHANTED HER ANCIENT SONGS.





I'M AFRAID SHE'S
ALREADY DEAD.
MADAME DUBOIS!



HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HOW TOUCHING!
RATHER *TORING TEAR*, ENY? WELL, THE
NEXT DAY, THE SHIP DOCKED IN
ENGLAND AND MADAME DUBOIS
CONSCIENTIOUSLY HAD EILEEN'S
BODY (WHAT THERE WAS OF IT)
SENT BACK TO KENNETH
WARTH, ALONG WITH AN
EXPLANATORY CABLEGRAM.
OF COURSE! HEH, HEH!



I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET
HER GO! I *KNEW* IT! WHY DID
I LET HER TALK ME INTO IT?
ALL ALONG I FELT THAT SOME-
THING WAS WRONG. AND, BY
HEAVEN, I'M GOING TO FIND
OUT WHAT IT WAS!



EILEEN'S SMALL FUNERAL WAS
HELD ON A USUAL, BARRY DAY,
ENSHROUDED IN HIS THOUGHTS,
KENNETH HARDLY HEARD THE
MINISTER'S EULOGY.

CABLEGRAM SAID SHE WAS
SENT ON TO MARSEILLES...
THE HOTEL DE CONCOURD.



THAT RIGHT, A TRANSCONTINEN-
TAL AIRPLANE WHIZZED ITS WAY
THROUGH THE RAIN-STREAKED
SKY ON ITS WAY TO MARSEILLES.
AND IN IT, SAT EILEEN'S BROTHER.



UPON REACHING MARSEILLES, KENNETH WENT
STRAIGHT TO MADAME DUBOIS'S SUITE IN THE
HOTEL DE CONCOURD. THE DOOR OPENED TO HIS
KNOCK AND A SLEEK, DARK-HAIRED GIRL STOOD
FACING HIM.

"HE? I'M MADAME
DUBOIS! WHY DO YOU
LOOK SO SURPRISED—
AND WHAT DO YOU
WANT?"

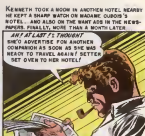
I... I DIDN'T EXPECT
YOU TO BE SO *FOUR*!
I... I WANT TO TALK TO
YOU... I'M EILEEN'S
BROTHER!



HE WAS LED INTO A SPACIOUS, EXPENSIVELY
DECORATED ROOM.

...AND THAT'S THE
STORY, MR. WARTH.
EXACTLY AS I
CALLED YOU!

I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
YOU *DID* SOMETHING TO
HER! YOU'RE LYING
TO ME!



PATIENTLY KENNETH WATCHED THE ELEVATOR THAT PRIVATELY SERVED MADAME CURBIS'S SUITE.



KENNETH FOLLOWED THE GIRL DOWN SEVERAL STREETS AND INTO A TRAVEL AGENCY.



THE FOLLOWING MIDNIGHT FOUND THE MAURETANIA HEADING OUT TO SEA, WITH MADAME CURBIS AND HER LOVELY COMPANION IN THEIR LUXURIOUS STATE-ROOM AND KENNETH MARTIN PACING THE DECK.



DURING THE NEXT FEW DAYS, KENNETH MADE FRIENDS WITH THE YOUNG GIRL AND SAW HER OFTEN! MADAME CURBIS REMAINED IN HER STATE-ROOM.

... I HAVE NEVER EVEN SEEN HER FACE. HER VEIL HIDES IT! BUT SHE IS SUCH A *GING* OLD WOMAN!



AND THEN A SUDDEN STORM SLASHED AT THE SHIP! IT ROCKED AND TORNED FOR SEVERAL DAYS, AND KENNETH SAW NO MORE OF THE BEAUTIFUL FRENCH GIRL...

STEWART: HAVE YOU SEEN MISS BLANCHARD?

YES, SIR. SHE IS CONFINED TO HER STATEROOM, SIR... SEASICKNESS?



DOCTOR: MISS BLANCHARD... I MUST KNOW HOW SHE IS!

WELL, FRANKLY, MR. MARTIN, I'M WORRIED! I CAN'T FIND THE SLIGHTEST THING WRONG WITH HER... BUT HER CONDITION IS CONSTANTLY GETTING WORSE!



CERTAIN NOW THAT MISS BLANCHARD WAS FACING HIS SISTER'S FATE, KENNETH POUNDED FORTH THE STORY OF ELEANOR'S DEATH...

DON'T YOU SEE? THE SAME THING IS HAPPENING TO MISS BLANCHARD!

INCREDIBLE! I'VE HEARD OF CASES LIKE THIS, BUT... COME! THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE!



PICKING UP SEVERAL STEWARDS ON THE WAY, THE DOCTOR AND KENNETH RACED ALONG THE DECK AND RUSHED INTO MADAME DUBOIS'S STATEROOM...

WHA...? WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?

STEWARDS! TAKE MISS BLANCHARD TO SHIP'S HOSPITAL!



NO! NO! NO! I WON'T LET YOU TAKE HER AWAY FROM ME! STOP! STOP!

SO AS I SAY, MEN! I'LL STAY AND LOOK MADAME DUBOIS IN HER STATEROOM!



STOP! STOP! I NEED HER! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!

LOOK THE DOOR, MARTIN. QUICKLY!



DOCTOR, WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

NO TIME TO EXPLAIN NOW, MR. MARTIN! WE MUST RUSH TO THE SHIP'S HOSPITAL!



FOR SEVERAL DAYS KENNETH WAITED IMPATIENTLY AS THE DOCTOR FOUGHT TO SAVE MISS BLANCHARD FROM DEATH! THEN... **SUCCESS!**

THANK GOD SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT! I BET MADAME DUBOIS

MADAME DUBOIS? GOOD LORD! I'D COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN HER! O'MIN, MARTIN... **WE MUST HURRY!**



LORD KNOWS HOW MANY INNOCENT GIRLS SHE HAS MURDERED! LUCKILY, WE SAVED MISS BLANCHARD! IF ONLY WE'RE NOT TOO LATE.

EEEYAAA AAGH!

LISTEN! THAT SCREAM FROM MADAME DUBOIS'S STATEROOM!



THE TWO MEN CRASHED INTO THE ROOM! HORRIFIED, THEY SAW MADAME DUBOIS SCRAWLING ON THE FLOOR, HER FACE AND BODY CONTORTING AND TWISTING AS THE CULMINATION OF TIME CREATED WREAKED ITS VENGEANCE UPON HER...

SHE... SHE'S **AGING!** WITHERING! RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES!



WITHIN MOMENTS, THE AGORING, SHRIEKING FIGURE HAD BROKEN AND CRUMPLED... FINALLY DISINTEGRATING INTO DUST!

GOOD LORD!

YES, MARTIN! DEPRIVED OF HER SOURCE OF LIFE, MADAME DUBOIS TURNED INTO THE DUST SHE SHOULD HAVE BEEN CENTURIES AGO!



-THE END-

BUT... BUT... CAN'T YOU EXPLAIN?

MADAME DUBOIS IS A MEMBER OF A UNIQUE GROUP OF HUMAN BEINGS... IF YOU CAN CALL THEM 'HUMAN'! LIKE VAMPIRES, DRINK ON HUMAN BLOOD, SO THESE VICIOUS CREATURES PROLONG THEIR LIVES BY SAPPING THE POWER OF THEIR VICTIMS! MADAME DUBOIS IS PROBABLY **HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD!**



HEH! HEH! HEH! IMAGINE LIVING SEVERAL **HUNDREDS** YEARS! THE CAT WITH NINE LIVES HAD NOTHING ON MADAME DUBOIS! LOOKS LIKE **LAST TIME** FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH HER! HEH, HEH! WELL... **OLD FORTY-SAPPERS** NEVER DIE... THEY JUST **DOZE AWAY** AND YOU'LL JUST DOZE AWAY WITH JEALOUSY IF YOUR FRIENDS HAVE BACK BONES AND YOU DON'T! SO

DON'T BE A **SAP-HEAD** IN COLUMN **THE HAULT KEEPER'S CORNER**, AND LEARN HOW TO **SET YOURS!** NOW, **THE OLD WITCH** WAITS FOR YOU! BUT I'LL BE BACK!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

YES, YES! YES! IT'S *ME* MAAM! THE OLD WITCH! MISTRESS OF THE HAUNTS OF FEAR! AS YOU KNOW, EACH TIME WE MEET, I LIGHT THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON AND COOK UP A TASTY TALE OF TERROR... JUST FOR YOU! SO SETTLE BACK! MY EVIL BREW IS ALMOST DONE! TUCK YOUR SHARONS UNDER YOUR CHINS AND I'LL LADSLE OUT THE MAD-MORRIS-OF-MORRISITY I CALL...

THE MONSTER IN THE ICE!



WHEN I TOLD HIM WHERE I WANTED TO GO, HE REFUSED TO TAKE ME! STARTED HOWLING SOME GARBAGE ABOUT THE MONSTER IN THE ICE!

WHAT? A MONSTER IN THE ICE? ARE YOU SURE THAT WAS WHAT HE SAID?

OF COURSE I'M SURE! I UNDERSTAND HIM AS WELL AS YOU! PERHAPS YOU CAN TALK TO HIM, DARSON! YOU KNOW HOW MUCH WE NEED THOSE HEADLINES!

I'LL TRY! I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO!

GERALD DARSON DRESSES IN THE AWKWARD, BULKY FUR CLOTHING OF THE FROZEN NORTH AND MOVED OUT OF THE WARM, SNOW-COVERED SHACK INTO THE BLASTING WIND! LEANING HARD AGAINST ITS BITING FORCE, HE STUMBLED TOWARD A NEARBY HILL.

DARSON ENTERS THE HAUS INTERIOR OF THE HELD! A FIRE BURNED CHEERILY IN THE CENTER OF THE ICE FLOOR.

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT REFUSING TO GUIDE MISTER CAMPBELL NORTH OF THE ICE FIELD, LORD?

NO DO? NEVER SO THERE!

WHAT IS IT? WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

MONSTER—IN ICE! ONCE HE ROARS ICE FIELDS! KILL MANY! THOSE WHO SEE IT AND LUCKY ENOUGH TO GET AWAY COME BACK OUT OF THEIR HANDS... CRAFT? IT HORRIBLE!

LONGO? YOU IN THERE?

YES, MESSA DARSON! I IN HERE! YOU COME.

DARSON RETURNS TO THE SHACK

WELL? DID YOU GET ANYWHERE?

THE POOR DEVIL IS SCARED BILLY! THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING FROZEN IN THE ICE OUT THERE... SOME MONSTER!

WHAT SAY HE SO TAKE A LOOK, DARSON? MAYBE WE CAN CONVINCE THESE SCREAMS HOW BILLY THEIR SUPERSTITIONS ARE!

I FIGURED YOU'D WANT TO DO THAT CAMPBELL! I HAD LONG FOR US UP A BIG-HEADED! C'MON! WE'LL BE ABLE TO REACH THERE AND SET BACK BY NIGHT-FALL!

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, AS THE TWO SCOUTS MAKE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE BARREN NORTHERN WASTES...

HOW MUCH FURTHER, GAWSON?

ACCORDING TO LONG, IT OUGHT TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE! KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN! **MUSH!**



HERBERT CAMPBELL FOLLOWS HIS CONVOY ACROSS THE SMOOTH ICE! SUDDENLY, SERIAL GAWSON STOPS! HE PEERS WIDE-EYED INTO THE ICE BENEATH HIS FEET...

CAMPBELL! COME HERE! QUICKLY!

WHAT IS IT, SERIAL? WHAT DO YOU SEE?



LOOK! DOWN THERE!

GOOD LORD! THERE IS SOMETHING IN THE ICE!



THE TWO MEN STARE DOWN AT THE HAIR PORN BENEATH THE FROZEN SURFACE

LOOKS LIKE A **HAIR PORN** FOR A MAN, THOUGH! CAN'T MAKE OUT HIS FACE, EITHER

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK! I'M GOING TO GET A **PICK-AXE!**



AFTER A FEW MINUTES, GAWSON RETURNS WITH AN AXE AND BEGINS TO CHOP THE ICE IN A LARGE CIRCULAR SHAPE AROUND THE BODY

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, SERIAL?

WELL, WE'RE GOING TO DIG THIS "MONSTER" OUT AND BRING IT BACK WITH US! PROBABLY SOME POOR EXPLORER'S FROZEN REMAINS!



SOON A HUGE SLACK OF ICE IS CHIPPED OUT OF THE ICE-FIELD, A BLOCK CONTAINING THE BODY OF THE ESCORT'S "ICE-MONSTER"! THE ICE-CASE IS LOADED ON THE DOG-SLED

DOWN, BOY! DOWN! **MUSH!**

SOMETHING'S **BOOTHERING** THOSE SLED-DOGS! THEY'RE ACTING awfully **NERVOUS!** YOU'D THINK THEY WERE NEVER NEAR A DEAD BODY BEFORE THIS!



SEVERAL HOURS LATER, THE GEOLOGISTS REACH CAMP WITH THEIR FIND.



WE'LL, LONO!
HERE YOU
ARE!

WHAT...WHAT YOU
NOT THERE?

TAKE A GOOD LOOK, LONO!
THERE'S YOUR ICE-MONSTER!
NOTHING BUT THE REMAINS
OF SOME POOR DEVIL WHO
FOGOT TO DEATH OUT
THERE!

NO! NOT TRUE!
MONSTER, NOT
HUMAN? MONSTER
HORRIBLE! ANYONE
WHO SEE IT SO SCARED
FROM FRIGHT!



WELL, YOU'RE
LOOKING AT
IT HIM NOW!
WHY DON'T
YOU GO BACK?

CANNOT SEE
FACE! SEE ONLY
HAIRY FORM!
FORM OF LARGE
MAN! FACE
FEATURES ARE
WHAT DRIVE MEN
OUT OF MIND! MY
ANCESTORS TELL
LEGEND.

LEGEND, MAN! HELP
WE SET THIS BLOCK
INSIDE! WE'RE GOING
TO SET THE ICE OFF
THIS CORPSE AND
SETTLE THIS THING
ONCE AND FOR ALL!

NOT! NOT!
LONO
AFRAID!
NO WANT
TO SEE
MONSTER!

DON'T
BE A
FOOL,
LONO!

EVEN IF IT WERE A HORRIBLE MON-
MONSTER, IT CAN'T HURT
YOU NOW! IT'S DEAD!
NOTHING DEAD CAN
HARM YOU!

STEER
NOT
DEAD!
ICE
HOLD IT!
ONCE ICE
AND
YOU FREE
IT!



LISTEN, LONO! ENOUGH OF THIS
NOT! YOU START CRIPPING AROUND
THAT BLOCK WHILE GERALD AND I
GET WARNED UP! UNDERSTAND?
AND IF YOU DON'T...NO HELP ME,
I'LL KICK YOU OUT OF CAMP
WITHOUT A DOG OR A MORSEL
OF FOOD!

YES, MISSA
CAMPELL! I
CHIEF ICE!



I'LL BE LISTENING IN THE
NEXT ROOM! I WANT TO
HEAR YOU CHIPPING.
SET ME?

O'NOH, HERBERT!
LEAVE THE POOR
FELLOW BE! HE'LL
DO IT!



DAWSON AND CAMPBELL GO INTO THE NEXT ROOM OF THE SHACK AND CLOSE THE DOOR! THE "CHACK-CHACK" OF LONG CHIPPING AWAY AT THE BLOCK OF ICE DRIFTS THROUGH TO THEM AS THEY SIT, WARNING THEMSELVES HEAR THE POT-BELLIED STOVE

YOU KNOW, HERE! SUPERSTITIONS AMONG NATIVE PEOPLE USUALLY HAVE A BASIS IN FACT!

BAH! NOT TWO TIME! YOU CAN SEE THAT THE THING IN THE ICE IS NO MONSTER!



SUDDENLY, GERALD DAWSON'S FACE LIGHTS UP! HIS EYES WIDEN...

HERE! DID YOU EVER READ "FRANKENSTEIN" BY MARY SHELLEY?

NO! BUT I SAW THE MOVIE...



NO! I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THE HOLLYWOOD VERSION! THAT WAS NOTHING LIKE THE BOOK! IN THE ORIGINAL "FRANKENSTEIN", DOCTOR FRANKENSTEIN PURSUED HIS MONSTER WHICH HE'D CONSTRUCTED FROM PARTS OF DEAD CORPSES AND LIVING ANIMALS... TO THE POINT HE NEVER DID KILL THE MONSTER! IT WAS LAST SEEN DRIFTING AWAY ON AN ICE-FLOW!

WHEN "FRANKENSTEIN" WAS FIRST PUBLISHED BACK IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, IT WAS NAMED THAT THE STORY WAS TRUE!

TRUE? YOU MEAN...



YES! SO WHAT?



SUPPOSE THAT FORMS WE HAVE IN THE NEXT ROOM IS THE REAL FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER!

DON'T BE FOOLISH, GERALD! YOU SOUND LIKE LONO IN THERE! HE... THAT'S FUNNY! HE'S STOPPED CHIPPING!



SUDDENLY, THE SHACK IS FILLED WITH A TERRIFIED, BLOOD-CURLING SHRIEK...

EEEEEEEEEEEEAAAAHHH!

LONO!

GOOD LONO! COME ON!



THE TWO GEOLOGISTS BURST THROUGH THE DOOR, AS THE SPLINTERING CRASH OF A WINDOW BEING SHATTERED IS HEARD

LOOK! THE ICE-MONSTER! IT'S GONE! IT WENT THROUGH THAT WINDOW! IT'S ALIVE!

LONO! LOOK AT HIM! HE'S WHITE AS A SHEET! HE'S BARFLING! HE... HE'S BEEN DRIVEN OUT OF HIS MIND!

HIE... HEE... HEE... HEE... EH... EH... EH... EH... EH... EH...





IT MUST BE
FRANKEN-
STEIN'S
MONSTER!
WHAT'LL
WE DO?

WE'VE GOT TO
DESTROY IT!



BUT HOW? ACCORDING
TO SHELLEY'S NOVEL...
BULLETS CAN'T
STOP IT! IT'S
NOT HUMAN!

WE'VE
GOT TO
SET IT
BACK INTO
THE ICE!
AND I THINK
I KNOW A
WAY!



LATER, OUTSIDE, IN THE FRIGID
ARCTIC WIND

KEEP CHOPPING! WE'VE
GOT TO REACH THE
WATER BELOW
THE ICE!

WHAT'S
YOUR
PLAN,
DARWENT?



SOONER OR LATER, THE MONSTER
WILL BE BACK FOR US! WHEN IT
DOES SHOW UP, ONE OF US WILL
ACT AS BAIT!

YOU HEAR
STAND ON THE
EDGE OF THIS
HOLE WE'VE CUT
IN THE ICE!



RIGHT! THEN, WHEN
IT ATTACKS THE ONE
WHO ACTS AS BAIT
INTO THE WATER
IT GOES!

I HOPE IT WORKS,
BERNARD!

SOON THE ICE IS CHOPPED THROUGH AND WATER
FILLS THE HOLE! THEN



LISTEN! HEAR THAT?

IT'S COMING! NOW
REMEMBER! DON'T
LOOK IN IT! YOU
KNOW WHAT HAPPENED
TO LONGB!

THE LUMBERING HULK OF THE MONSTER APPEARS
OVER THE TOP OF A SNOW-DRIFT! IT MOVES TOWARD
THE TWO SCIENTISTS...THE HOLE IN THE ICE
BETWEEN THEM

IT'S COMING TOWARD US!
IT... ON MY GOD!

DON'T LOOK AT IT,
HEAR! DON'T!
TURN AWAY!

YAAAAAAAHH!



HERBERT CAMPBELL FALLS TO HIS KNEES NEXT TO THE HOLE IN THE ICE...WHIMPERING? THE MONSTER MOVES TOWARD HIM...

THEN, WITH A SHRIEK THE HORRIBLE THING PLUNGES INTO THE OPENING THAT THE TWO SCALDSISTS HAVE CHOPPED...

THE STRUGGLING MONSTER REACHES OUT, CLUTCHING HERBERT CAMPBELL'S LEG...

HERB! GET UP! GET UP!

HERB! WE'VE GOT IT! WE'VE... LOOK OUT, HERB!

EEEEEEH-H! HERB! BIVE ME YOUR HAND! IT'LL GRAB YOU IN!

GERALD DAWSON TURNS TO HELP HERBERT CAMPBELL, AND HIS EYES FALL UPON THE GRUESOME MONSTER AS CAMPBELL'S HAND CLOSER AROUND HIS IN A VICE-LIKE GRASP...

GOOD LORD! HOW BRASTLY!



LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE MONSTER DRAGS CAMPBELL INTO THE FREEZING WATER IN AN EFFORT TO CLIMB FROM THE HOLE... AND DAWSON, PARALYZED FROM THE BLIMPSE OF THE MONSTER'S FACE, IS DRAGGED DOWN WITH HIM...



SEE, HEE! YEP! THE THREE OF THEM WENT INTO THE DRINK! AND IT DON'T TAKE LONG FOR THE DRINK TO FREEZE SOLID, EITHER! BUT WAIT! THIS ISN'T QUITE THE END! NOT QUITE, YET! ABOUT A YEAR LATER THE U.S. AIR FORCE DECIDES TO BUILD A BASE NEAR THAT VERY SPOT...

RE DAY... LOOK THERE, MAJOR! SEET! SOME BODIES... FROZEN IN THE ICE!

HERB! GET SOME MEN, SERGEANT! WE'LL CHOP THEM OUT AND SEE WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!

HEE, HEE! WELL, HERE WE GO AGAIN! AT THIS POINT, I THINK I'LL END MY LITTLE TALE! AFTER ALL, HOW MUCH HORROR CAN YOU FIELDS TAKE? WHAT? YOU GARY THEN YOU OUGHT TO SEND FOR MY BACK ISSUE!

THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER CONTAINS ALL THE INFORMATION! IT FOLLOWS... YOU SHOULD PARDON THE EXPRESSION... THE FEET! READ IT AND FIND OUT HOW TO GET YOUR COPY! NOW I MUST TOOKLE OFF!

I HAVE A DOORING GLASS TO ATTEND! I'M THE TEACHER!





THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen J. Gappil

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear VK,

Issue #6 was fairly good. I think it would've been better if Wally Wood did a story. "About Face!" was the best story in the issue. I think they should've shown what her face looked like (in the end, her face appeared, but on her chauffeur's head). Overall, this was a great example of good artwork and EC quality. Please print my address.

Brandon Hendrix

POB 117
Broken Bow, OK 74728

Wood could do a mean horror story, but he departed our life for the far-out all and standing. Suspensitory magel! Yeah, the gal in "About Face!" did a number on her shady chauffeur, but he **DROVE** her to H! Hah, hah! Been waiting over forty years to crack that joke! —VK

Dear Russ,

I hope your holidays are the best. Me and a couple are sharing the holidays especially Thanksgiving with me as the turkey. You printed my address and nobody wrote (except the postman must be a ghoul from the dead-letter office) I quit smoking—after 27+ odd+ years of smoking coffin nails I got (the doctor, a fire-walker, said I was playing with fire— Don't do as I do, do as I say.) So once I said it was the end it was easy. Have a good Christmas and let Sandy Clause open the presents for you.

Frank K. (ECF McElroy, esq.)

New Holland, PA

We had a great Holiday here (due to printing schedules, we're only now able to reprint) We exchanged gifts, and I exchanged The Crypt-Keeper (for a Vegemite!). —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper

My name is Mark Petrosian and I am 11 years old and I love your horror stories. I have 8 VAULT comics. I have some questions for you. 1) Will you ever get a T-shirt like the Crypt-Keeper? 2) What is your favorite food? 3) Do you like Beavis and Butt-head? If you do, who is dumber? 4) How old are you?

Mark Petrosian

Upton, NY

1) Likely no. 2) Would you guess if I said hamburger and french fries? 3) No. If I did, it would be ME who's dumber. 4) I've read considerably since we began these reprints! —VK

I guess you could say I am an aficionado fan of old things. Everything from Monty Python to The Moody Blues entices me to further investigate, so the moment I see your show on FOX I don't have cable (SBS) I knew I was experiencing deja-vu.

I enjoy seeing the shows, and looking for them in the comics or vice-versa to check the story and the differences. I saw "Pitting Punishment" (VAULT #6) on TV, and then got the comic, and I was shocked at the difference in story. Oh, well. Also, from VAULT #5, I recently saw "Wine-red Concoction", and it was barely recognizable as the story from the comic! Please include my address, as I would love to hear from fellow fans!

Ashley Pegg

40 Pine Hill St
Manchester, CT 06040

I am not responsible for the TV scripts. Even CK is not responsible for them. We like to hear your comments on how they "rack up." —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Hi! My name is Grant Smith and I just recently subscribed to CRYPT and VAULT. They're great! I only have a couple of questions to ask you. 1) What issues had an "Artist of the Issue" of Jack Kamen? I'm dying to know what he looks like! 2) On "Crypt" (the TV show) does Jack Kamen get played by the real Jack Kamen or is he just an actor who looks like Jack Kamen? Finally, are they ever going to come out with "Vault of Horror" cards? I hope so! The Vault-Keeper rules! Your devoted fan

Grant Smith age 11

Stanford, CT

Kamen's life ran in the original HAUNT #117 and W SCI 11, in one series about "New." But the idea ran on the inside front cover which we use for ads. Why not check out our reprint of CRYPT #61, in 64-pg RCP CRYPT 1 (also available in tabloid size as EXTRA-LARGE CRYPT for \$4.) That issue (which we'll reprint as CRYPT 12) contained "Kamen's Biography", with altogether too many depictions of the EC crew! Gotta have been an actor doing Kamen on TV. —VK

Dear CK, CW and VK,

I have questions for The CK, CW, and The VK. CK first. CK, 1) What is your favorite comic book? 2) When and where were you born? 3) Why do you like only crazy things?

CW, 1) How old are you? 2) When did you get "drawn"? VK, 1) Do you like CK or CW better? 2) How old are you?

I think it is pitiful that those idiots called CW and VK idiots. You're cool, CK, but you should share the attention with CW and VK. Please print my address. I want a pencil too!

Cap Pierce

3112 Wabash
FT Worth, TX 76105-0244

1) Answer for everyone, CK likes VAULT best, was born in a barn, and likes creepy stuff because he's a CREEPY. CW is a 35-year-old and was first drawn in a cave ash in Massachusetts. Lastly, if the both CK and CW better—than a job in the eye with a stick! Aaaa! You glad you asked? —VK

NEXT ISSUE



Dear Russ, VK, OW, CK

I am an avid reader of horror novels, comic books and MAD magazine. Today at the local bookstore I discovered that a company was finally reprinting those old EC horror comics. The only problem was only one title was there: THE VAULT OF HORROR 10. I bought it, not even glancing at the superhero comics. The Vault-Keeper makes Superman look like a wimp! The Crypt-Keeper, on the other hand...

Some readers may not know it but EC comics is still alive today, and they are the publishers of MAD magazine. Why a magazine and not a comic book? Well, back when comics were under fire by everyone, especially EC's comics, MAD was a comic book along with all the others. When the Comic Code Authority went into effect, instead of dampening their comic line's popularity, the late Bill Gaines decided to drop the comic book business and change MAD into a larger black-and-white format as it is today. My question is, since you are already reprinting EC comics of the same era, why not reprint the first MAD (29 to be exact)? I know I would buy them and many MAD fans would too. If readers are still interested in the MAD-horror comic connection, the book "Completely Mad" by Marie Perlelewski is very informative and funny. As a statistic, many of the EC artists are still alive and working for MAD. Jack Drake does art for them still. Please print my address so I can get a pen pal into MAD and horror.

Happy Holidays Russ, Old Witch and Vault-Keeper! (Crypt-Keeper: Bah, Hurnburg)

David Beckner

1103 Woodlawn AV
Pensacola, MD 21122

MAD was, in fact, the only Bill Gaines EC comic to be published by "Educational Comics." Later, it changed hands several times, and requires a separate business deal to allow reprinting in this series. —VK

Dear VK,

My name is Adam Brooks. I have just recently become a fan. My brother has been a fan since EC (Detective Comics) meant Dollar Comics. We like all the EC 50s comics.

In your VK issue I think you screwed up. The story "The Beast of the Full Moon" just shows on page 8. Please write me back and tell me how the story ended. You may print my address. Thanks.

Adam Brooks

10949 Cagle Rd
Lapine, OR 97136

Here's what you need; cut this out and paste it on the last panel of "Beast." —VK



Dear VK,

I am your greatest fan. Just recently I was getting ready to watch my favorite show, " Tales from the Crypt," when I thought to myself "Gee! I see a comic called TALES FROM THE CRYPT!" So the next day there I was at the only comic book store who sells EC in my neighborhood and sure enough there it was staring me in the face: TPFC #8. So I picked up one of each of your horror titles. That night I had one regret, that I wasn't born in the 50s. I'm trying to convince my friends to start collecting EC, they collect Marvel (sneering) but that I collect Marvel, but how can I compare to titles like VAULT, HAUNT and CRYPT. Keep up the good work, VK, OW, And you too Russ.

Richard Lallier

Providence RI

Everett

—VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Properly on you I'm selling my ECs and buying fruit pies to feed the squirrels for your information I have no more "chuppin'" then a class. I am one who lives entirely withdrawn from the world, so determined am I to escape pest repetition and avoid old mistakes. My only outlets are painting and letter-heading magazines like yours. If you had threatened to send the "Gravel-Teacher" or something to suit my taste, it may have been laughed off, but there is no

humor in this sort of thing, only hurtfulness, and you air drew me an apology. Disgustfully yours.

David Hall

Seattle WA

I apologize, but The Old Ghoul-Teacher is on her way to Seattle! —VK

THE OLD GHOUL-TEACHER



Dear Russ

I love all of your EC comic books. The only one I don't like is TWO-FISTED. I wish you would make EC every month. If you made blankie posters, wallpaper, pillows etc I'd buy them all—I've tried to buy all your comics, but it's hard with no comic shop with your comics. The only ones I have are CRYPT 1, 4, 8 and VAULT 8. I also have VAULT OF HORROR 33, the old comic!

Nicolas A. Mendez

Redlands HTS, CA

Need I say that all book issues are still available? See the end of the column for details. —VK

Dear VK,

I ordered some back issues of VAULT and in issue 21 saw a letter by Susan Carles. I agree with her totally when she says VAULT should have its own show. I think HAUNT should also have its own show. So if there is a possibility of either show please tell me. Please give me a serious answer.

Michael Dooney

Saddle Brook, NJ

I say the chances are slim & none. And, I am serious. Prove me wrong, HRO! —VK

NEXT ISSUE



Also available this month are: WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED TALES. Watch for HAUNT, INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION and CRYPT next month. Don't forget CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and SQUID. See them at your local comic book shop or subscription (see ad at the end of this column).

SUBS WANTED: CRYPT #1 (subject to availability), \$5 each. All others up this issue \$5, \$15 each. Issues #4 and up, \$5 each. Add \$3 per order (\$10 outside US) for S&H.

We want letters! Write to:
VAULT
SUZIE GOODMAN
POB 608
WEST PLAINS MO 65071

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
VAULT OF HORROR #123 (JULY, DEC 1944) 62

COVER by Johnny Craig

"Fountains of Youth!"
"The Monster in the Ice!"
"Gone Fishing!"
"What the Dog Dragged In!"

Johnny Craig
Graham Ingels
Jack Davis
Jack Kamen

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What will HBO's *Crypt-Keeper* look like when they put together the reunion show in 2010? Probably something like the guy at right! This ravaged visage comes courtesy David Lowery, Irving, TX, and makes a horrible heading for THE CRYPT-KEEPER's PAGE OF FINE ARTS.

FINE ARTS #27



William Pearson, Rutland, VT sent in this TWO-PICTED duo, and I wanted to have the anonymous editor run it in the lead of that title. "He roared!" he cried. Though I offered to do some judicious cutting on William's behalf Ed Aron was simply too quick on his feet and escaped my verbal blade. So, I ran it here! —CR



A "doctored" EC cover, sent over from my compatriot, Dr. stalks of all (ama). Seems that artist is Bostray (of Brempt, ATLANTIS). —CR



THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF FINE ARTS



Back again is our own Banta Terror (art-art), John Miller, with another identity. Huzzah, Lee! —CR

Send your entries (not returnable, not too long, not too big, legible double-spaced text &/or bold black art. Warning...we will) to:

THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S PAGE OF FINE ARTS

RUSH COCHRAN
POB 488
WEST PLAINS MO 65779

The editors contribute. We never attempt to claim ownership of reader contributions. We will not publish anything that is not the property of the contributor. We will not publish anything that is not the property of the contributor. We will not publish anything that is not the property of the contributor.

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! YEP! IT'S YOUR OLD HORROR FRIEND, THE GHOST-KEEPER! NOW I 'ENTERTAIN' YOU! HERE'S A SPINE-TIMBLER ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR YOU LOVERS OF FISHING! JUST SET YOURSELVES DOWN ON THAT BAR OF MOORS AND I'LL BEGIN THE PIERCING TALE OF TERROR I CALL...

GONE...FISHING!



THE GUST COVERED AUTOMOBILE ROLLED TO A STOP WHERE THE BLACK TAR ROAD KNIFTED THROUGH THE SAND-DUNES AND ENDED ABRUPTLY AT THE EDGE OF A STRETCH OF WHITE BEACH! BEYOND, THE SURF WHITE AND FROTHY...ROLLED IN FROM THE VAST SEA, FILLING THE BRISA SALT AIR WITH AN OMINOUS THUNDER.

"WELL, STEVEN! HERE WE ARE! BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T IT?"

"REALLY? WANT I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU WANTED ON DEAD-AND-JAR ALONG! YOU KNOW I DON'T APPROVE OF FISHING!"



MAXWELL LARKIN, THE NOTED SPORT-FISHERMAN, GOT OUT OF THE CAR AND BEGAN TO UNSTRAP THE LONG SPLIT-BAMBOO RODS THAT WERE FASTENED TO THE BACK OF THE CAR-ROOF...

JUST WAIT TILL YOU
LOOK INTO ONE,
STEVE! YOU'LL
CHANGE YOUR MIND!
YOU'LL SEE!

I DON'T! IT, MAX!
I'M OPPOSED TO FISH-
ING ON MORAL
GROUNDS!

MAX UNLOCKED THE THUMB OF THE CAN AND LIFTED OUT A HUGE TACKLE BOX! LADEN DOWN WITH THE FISHING EQUIPMENT, STEVE AND MAX MADE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE BRILLIANT WHITE BEACH TOWARD THE SURF...

HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY
BE OPPOSED TO FISHING ON
MORAL GROUNDS,
STEVE?

IT'S *GRUELFY* TO
LIVING CREATURES!
IT MUST BE VERY
PAINFUL TO THE
POOR FISH!

AT THE WATER'S EDGE, THE SPORT-FISHERMAN AND HIS RELUCTANT COMPANION SET DOWN THE EQUIPMENT! MAX REMOVED A HOLLOW TUBE WITH A SPIKED POINT FROM HIS TACKLE BOX AND GROVE IT INTO THE GROUND...

BAR! FISH
DON'T FEEL
PAIN!

ARE YOU SURE,
MAX? WHO'S TO
SAFF IN
WHAT'S THAT?

A SAND-SPRINT!
IT HOLDS THE ROD
UPRIGHT SO SAND
CAN'T GET INTO
THE REEL! SEE?

OH! VERY
CLEVER!

MAX FUMBLING IN THE METAL BOX AND FINALLY REMOVED A LONG-SHAPE, FISH-LIKE FORM RESEMBLED WITH SETS OF HOOKS...

UM! THAT'S
A PRETTY
MEAN-
LOOKING
THING!
WHAT IS
IT?

IT'S A STAFFED-
BASS PLUG! THE
BASS THINKS IT'S
A FISH! IT DOES
FOR IT AND...
WHAM!

THEN YOU JUST
HAUL HIM IN,
EH?

NOT AS EASY AS ALL
THAT! A BASS WILL PUT
ON A PRETTY STIFF
FIGHT! MIGHT TAKE AN
HOUR TO LAND HIM!

AND THAT'S
SUPPOSED TO BE
A SPORT?

AW, CUT IT OUT, STEVE!
JUST SIT DOWN AND WATCH
FOR A WHILE! YOU'LL SEE...
IF I'M LUCKY!

MAXWELL TIES THE BASS-FLUG TO THE END OF HIS LINE AND LIFTS THE ROD FROM ITS SAND-SPICE HOLDER...

"IF YOU'RE LUCKY! YOU MEAN IF THE BASS IS UNLUCKY!"

"I'LL SHOW YOU THAT! NOW THIS TYPE OF FISHING IS CALLED *SUNF-CASTING*! FIRST, YOU CAST THE FLUG AS FAR OUT INTO THE SUN AS YOU CAN.



MAXWELL SWINGS THE ROD OVER HIS SHOULDER, WHIPPED IT FORWARD, AND THE FLUG SAILED OUT OVER THE INCOMING SNEAKERS...

LIKE THAT! THEN YOU START TO REEL IT IN SLOWLY.



MAX BEGAN TO WIND THE REEL SLOWLY AND EVENLY, TAKING THE LINE BACK UP.

... LIKE THAT! THE FLUG, BECAUSE OF ITS DESIGN, BOBS AND WEAVES THROUGH THE WATER SOMEWHAT RESEMBLING A SMALL FISH! STRIPERS FEED ON SMALL FISH IN THE BUREAU.



SUDDENLY, THE ROD IN MAX'S HANDS BENT AND THE REEL BEGAN TO SING AS THE LINE SPUN OFF IT.

"A STRIKE! I'VE HOOKED ONE!"



AS STEVE WATCHED, MAX STRUGGLED WITH THE HOOKED FISH! THE ROD BENT UNDER THE STRAIN! MAX BEGAN TO REEL IN, BUT MANY TIMES THE LINE WOULD GO SHOOTING BACK OUT INSIDE OF HIS WORK.

"CAN'T YOU JUST REEL HIM OFF! MUST YOU LET HIM GO OUT LIKE THAT AGAIN?"

"IF I DON'T, THE LINE WOULD SNAP!"



I'M NOT LETTING HIM RUN OUT! HE'S TAKING IT OUT! SNAPE! THERE'S A SERIES OF CLATCH BOKS INSIDE A SUNF-REEL CALLED A 'DRAG'! I SET IT FOR THE TESTED STRENGTH OF THE LINE! THEN, IF THE FISH TAKES HARDER, THE DRAG RELEASES THE LINE AND AVOIDS BREAKING...

WOW! THEY CERTAINLY THINK OF EVERYTHING, DON'T THEY?



MAX CONTINUES TO FIGHT THE HOOKED FISH FOR TWENTY MINUTES! AT TIMES THEY COULD SEE IT LEAP CLEAR OF THE WATER IN AN EFFORT TO FREE ITSELF.

LOOK AT HIM JUMP!

"IT'S HORRIBLE!"





MAX PLACED THE FISH INTO A PLASTIC BAG...

THERE! THAT'LL KEEP THE SUN OFF YOU!



THEN HE CHECKED HIS LINE AND PREPARED FOR ANOTHER CAST...

MAYBE I'LL HOOK INTO ANOTHER ONE!



THE ROD WHIPPED FORWARD AND THE BAG-PLUS SAILED OUT OVER THE INCOMING BREAKERS ONCE MORE...

AH! THAT WAS A GOOD CAST! C'MON, BAGGY! HIT ME!



FOR A FULL HOUR, MAX CAST INTO THE WHITE FOAMY WAVES... REELED IN... CAST... REELED IN... BUT WITHOUT ANOTHER STRIKE.

LOOKS LIKE *ONE* IS ALL I GET TODAY! AH! I'LL WAIT FOR A WHILE! I'M HUNGRY ANYWAY!



MAX HAWLED IN HIS LINE, SET THE ROD IN THE SAND- SPIKE AND LOCKED HIS LIFE...

BOY! A RICE SANDWICH AND... OH, NO! THE LUNCH IS IN THE CAR!



MAX CURSED AND KICKED UP THE SAND ABRUPTLY. SUDDENLY, HE SAW SOMETHING LYING THERE... SOMETHING BRIGHT AND COLOURFUL...

HEY! LOOKS LIKE A CANDY BAG!



MUST HAVE BEEN IN MY TACKLE-BOX AND GOT KICKED OUT! WHAT LUCK! I'M STARVED!



MAX UNWRAPPED THE CANDY BAR AND BIT INTO IT HURRIE! HE NEVER NOTICED THE SILKY, ALMOST INVISIBLE THREAD HANGING FROM IT...



SUDDENLY THE SILK THREAD GREW TIGHT! MAX FELT A BRISTLING PAIN IN HIS CHEEK...



THE PAIN IN MAX'S CHEEK WAS UNBEARABLE! IT FELT LIKE A BARBED HOOK! THE LINE, RUNNING FROM HIS MOUTH, BECAME TIGHTER AND TIGHTER! MAX SCREAMED IN PAIN...



SLOWLY, STEADILY, MAX WAS DRAGGED... SCREAMING AND STRUGGLING TOWARD THE WATER! THE STINGING PAIN IN HIS MOUTH WAS EXCRUCIATING! HE TRIED TO SPIT IT OUT... TRIED TO FREE HIMSELF... BUT IT WAS NO USE! BAHAMBLY, HE CUS HIS HEELS INTO THE SOFT SAND! IT DID NO GOOD! ON AND ON HE WAS DRAGGED, ON TOWARD THE ROARING SURF...



THE BUZZY AUTOMOBILE PULLED UP TO THE BEACH WHERE THE ROAD ENDED! STEVE GOT OUT! HE LOOKED DOWN TOWARD THE SLAY-HOO STANDING ALONE ON THE DESERTED BEACH...



SOMETHING CAUGHT STEVE'S EYE! SOMETHING OUT IN THE WATER! AS IT BROKE THE SURFACE, A BLOOD-CURLING SCREAM ECHOED ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE INCOMING BREAKERS! IT HESITATED FOR A SPLIT-SECOND... THEN IT WAS GONE... A MAN'S HEAD!



HEH, HEH! YEP! MAX WAS HOOKED! NOW HE KNOWS HOW A FISH FEELS! WHAT KIND OF FISH DOES BEACH-CATCHING FOR MEEN, YOU MEAN? WELL, HOW SHOULD I KNOW? AS I A FISH? HEH, HEH! ONLY THE WAY! NEXT TIME YOU GO FISHING, BE CAREFUL! REMEMBER! SOME FISH MAY BE BAIT-ING, AND YOU MIGHT GET HOOKED, TOO! BUT YOU MIGHT BE HOOKED WHEN YOU SEND FOR SAGE ISSUES! SHOOKED IS A BETTER WORD! THE VAULT-KEEPER TELLS HOW TO GET FISHES IN HIS COLUMN, THE HUNT-KEEPER'S CORNER! NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO HIM! 'BYE!



AND NOW, COME SEE...

What the dog
dragged him!



BETTY REACHED DEEP INTO HER WORLD OF DARKNESS AND PATTED JERRY'S SOFT BLIND HEAD. THEN SHE RAISED A WARNING FINGER. HER BLIND EYES STARTING FAST THE SQUATTING DOG...

...AND MIND YOU,

JERRY! GO STRAIGHT TO THE BUTCHER SHOP! MRS. SIMPSON WILL BE HERE SOON, AND I HAVE TO HAVE THAT ORDER IN THE HOUSE!



DEFTLY, WITH FINGERS LONG ACCUSTOMED TO THE RITUAL, BETTY FOLDED THE MEAT ORDER AND SLIPPED IT UNDER THE ANXIOUS DOG'S COLLAR...

SO COME RIGHT BACK WITH IT, YOU HEART THERE! NOW, OFF YOU GO!



JERRY STARTED AWAY LIKE A SHOT AT HIS BIRTHSIST'S COMMAND, SCAMPERING OUT OF THE BEDROOM, AND DOWN THE RICKETY STAIRS...



AND WATCH OUT FOR CARS, BOY!

THROUGH THE SHAKEN PANEL IN THE BATTERED FRONT DOOR, DOWN THE OVERGROWN PATH, THE DOG RACED



ON UP THE DUSTY ROAD TO TOWN² FROM HER BEDROOM WINDOW, BETTY SAT IN HER WHEELCHAIR, STARRING OUT WITH SIGHTLESS EYES...



THER, WHEN JERRY'S YELPS COULD NO LONGER BE HEARD. BETTY PUSHED HARD ON THE RIGHT WHEEL, AND SWUNG AWAY FROM THE WARM SUNNY AIR OUTSIDE SO THAT SHE FACED THE DUSTY RAMSHACKLE INTERIOR OF HER SUB-DOWN HOUSE



GOOD GEE! SOOO OLD JERRY! I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT YOU!

MEANWHILE, FAR DOWN THE DUSTY ROAD, JERRY RACED ALONG, PICKING UP THE PEEBLES WITH HIS HIND PAWS. SOON HE APPROACHED THE STATE HIGHWAY THAT LED INTO TOWN



AS THE LOPED DOG SWUNG OUT OF THE DIRT HIGHROAD ONTO THE SMOOTH STRIP OF CONCRETE HIGHWAY, A SPEEDING CAR HURLED AT HIM! THE STILL, HOT AFTERNOON AIR WAS FILLED WITH THE SCREAMING THRILL OF BRAKES AND THE YIPING SQUEAL OF A DOG IN PAIN



GOOD LORD!

IN HER PLASTER-CRACKED ROOM, BETTY LIFTED HER SENSITIVE FINGERS FROM THE WART-LIKE BRAILLE BOOK AND LISTENED! IT CAME LIKE A FIRE THREAD STRETCHED ACROSS THE BURNY AFTERNOON AIR. THE FAINT SOUND OF A CAR STOPPING! THEN IT WAS GONE. AS IF A GIANT SCISSOR HAD SNAPPED IT.



WHAT. WHAT WAS THAT IT. SOUNDED LIKE BRAKES...OUT ON THE HIGHWAY!

THE WAR IN THE SNAPPY SPORT COAT LOOKED DOWN AT THE STILL FURRY MOUND LIMP BEFORE HIS EXPENSIVE CAR. HE SHOOK HIS HEAD. THEN HE STOOPED AND PLACED HIS HAND ON THE DOG'S CHEST...

POOR THING! RAN RIGHT OUT IN FRONT OF ME! HE... WHAT'S THAT HEART'S STILL BEATING! HE'S... ALIVE!



BETTY TURNED AT THE SOUND BEHIND HER...

JERRY! THAT YOU?

NO, MISS BETTY! 'TAIN'T JERRY! IT'S ME, MRS. JIMPMON! I LOOKED IN THE ICE-BOX BEFORE I CAME UP! HOW'D YOU EXPECT ME TO COOK YOUR GINGER WHEN THERE'S NO-THING TO COOK?



THE SLEEK CAR PULLED UP BEFORE THE VETERINARY, AND THE MAN IN THE SPORT COAT CARRIED THE LIMP FORM OF THE DOG INSIDE! AFTER A HASTY EXAMINATION, THE WHITE-COATED YET ANNOUNCED...

HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT... HE'S JUST BRUISED UP A BIT!



WHILE BACK AT THE HOUSE...

JERRY SHOULD BE BACK BY NOW, MRS. JIMPMON! I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT!

I DON'T WIND DOWN IN AND COOKIN' FOR YOU, MISS BETTY, BUT I CAN'T WAIT AROUND ALL DAY! I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH WHAT YOU HAVE!



THE AFTERNOON PASSED AND EVENING CAME... BUT STILL THE DOG DID NOT RETURN! BETTY SAT IN HER ROOM... IN HER WORLD OF DARKNESS, WAITING...

OH, JERRY! JERRY! WHERE ARE YOU?



WHILE A FEW MILES AWAY, IN HIS LUXURIOUS HOME, ROGER CARTWRIGHT, THE WEALTHY PHILANTHROPIST, CONFORTED THE INJURED JERRY...

JUST TAKE IT EASY, POLLY! IN A FEW DAYS, YOU'LL BE GOOD AS NEW! THEN WE'LL SEE ABOUT RETURNING YOU TO YOUR MASTER!



AND SO, TWO DAYS LATER, BETTY HEARTBROKEN OVER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF HER CHERISHED COMPANION, SASPED AS HIS FRIENDLY BARK DRIFTED UP TO HER FROM BELOW...

JERRY! IT'S JERRY! HE'S COME BACK!



BETTY FLUNG HER ARMS ABOUT JERRY AS HE SCAMPERED INTO HER BEDROOM AND HUZZLED HIS WARM NOSE AGAINST HER TEAR-STREAKED CHEEK...

OH, JERRY! JERRY! I WAS AFRAID YOU'D BEEN **KILLED!** HE ALMOST WAS, WHEE!



BETTY LIFTED HER HEAD? SOMEONE WAS IN THE ROOM? SOMEONE HAD BROUGHT JERRY BACK TO HER? A MAN.

MY CAR STRUCK THE POOR FELLOW WHEN HE DARTED OUT DARTS THE HIGHWAY THREE DAYS AGO! I TOOK HIM HOME WITH ME! I TRACED HIM TO YOU BY THE NOTE IN HIS COLLAR!

WHO...WHO ARE YOU? I'M SORRY, I CAN'T SEE YOU! I'M BLIND!



ROGER CANTWRIGHT STUDIED THE ATTRACTIVE BLIND GIRL IN THE WHEELCHAIR AS SHE CLUTCHED HER DOG AFFECTIONATELY...

MY NAME IS... ER...YOU CAN CALL ME **ROBERT!** HOW DO YOU DO? I'M BETTY MARSH! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU, ROGER!



DON'T TRY, BETTY! DO YOU IT WAS THE LEAST! LIVE CLOSE I COULD DO UNDER SIX, ROBERT THE CIRCUMSTANCES!



A FEW MILES AWAY! YOU HAVE A VERY CLEVER DOG! HE PRACTICALLY GUIDED ME HOME!

YES! HE IS SMART! HE DOES ALL MY **SHOPPING** FOR ME! YOU SEE, I CAN'T VERY WELL CONFIDE TO THIS WHEELCHAIR AS I AM!



ROGER AND BETTY CONTINUED TO CHAT, AND THE SHADOWS OUTSIDE BEGAN TO LENGTHEN AS THE AFTERNOON WORE AWAY...

WELL, I MUST BE GOING, YOU'LL COME AGAIN, BETTY! IT'S GETTING LATE! WONT YOU, ROGER? I HAVE SO FEW VISITORS!

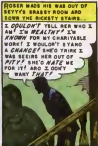


ROGER LOOKED DOWN AT THE SWEET YOUNG HELPLESS THING BEFORE HIM...

OF COURSE I'LL COME AGAIN, BETTY! ANYTIME YOU WANT! ME TO! JUST SEND YOUR **DOG!** HE KNOWS WHERE I LIVE!

WONT YOU TELL ME? I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR LAST NAME!





A WEEK WENT BY! ROGER'S VISITS BECAME MORE FREQUENT! BETTY WOULD SEND JERRY FOR HIM, AND HE'D COME BACK WITH THE HAPPILY HELPING COSE! THEN THEY'D BE TOGETHER... LAUGHING... CHATTING! ONE DAY...

BETTY: PLEASE, ROGER! I COULDN'T! I'M AN INVALID... BLIND! I'LL HARRY HIM!
ROGER: BE A BORDEN!



BUT I LOVE YOU DARLING!



OH, ROGER! ROGER! DO YOU I'VE LOVED YOU SINCE THE FIRST TIME YOU CAME HOME!

SWEETHEART!

DEAREST!



ROGER WAS WHISTLING A CHEERFUL TUNE AS HE SPUN HIS CAR OUT OF THE DIRT SIDE ROAD ONTO THE HIGHWAY! ENDSORED IN THOUGHTS OF THE WONDERFUL HOURS HE'D JUST SPENT WITH BETTY, HE NEVER SAW THE FAST APPROACHING TRUCK.



THE NEXT DAY, BETTY SAT ALONE IN HER WORLD OF DARKNESS, WAITING FOR JERRY TO RETURN WITH ROGER... WAITING FOR THE HAPPY SUNDAY! BUT WHEN JERRY TROTTED IN SILENTLY... AND LAMED HIS HEAD IN HER LAP, WHISPERING...



JERRY: ISN'T ROGER HOME TODAY? I WONDER WHERE HE COULD BE?

THE DAY AFTER THAT, BETTY SENT JERRY ONCE AGAIN. AND ONCE AGAIN, JERRY RETURNED ALONE!



JERRY: DON'T YOU BRING HIM BACK TODAY! EITHER! WHAT IS IT? YOU'RE TREMBLING!

DAY AFTER DAY, BETTY WOULD SEND JERRY FOR ROGER... AND DAY AFTER DAY, THE PARTING COSE WOULD RETURN... ALONE.



IT'S BEEN OVER A MONTH, JERRY! WHERE IS HE? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM? OH, DEAR LORD! IF ONLY YOU COULD TALK... TELL ME WHAT'S WRONG!

SOON, JERRY EVER REFUSED TO GO WHEN BETTY ORDERED HIM TO BRING BACK ROGER! THE DOG WOULD JUST SQUAT BEFORE HER, HIS HEAD COCKED TO ONE SIDE... HIS EYES SAS... WATCHING HER CMT...



PLEASE, JERRY! PLEASE...
DOG, DOG... BRING ROGER HERE!
I WANT HIM SO! PLEASE!

THEN, ONE DAY, ABOUT TWO MONTHS AFTER ROGER HAD STOPPED COMING TO CALL... AFTER BETTY'S TEARFUL PLEADING, THE DOG DARTED AWAY... DOWN THE RICKETY STEPS AND UP THE GUSTY ROAD! BY THAT NIGHT, HE'S STILL NOT RETURNED...



OH, JERRY! JERRY! YOU'VE
DECEITED ME. TOO! I'M ALL
ALONE, NOW!

DAYS WENT BY, BUT JERRY DID NOT COME BACK! BETTY SAT ALONE EACH NIGHT IN HER SHABBY BED-ROOM... CRYING! ONE NIGHT, ABOUT A WEEK AFTER JERRY HAD GONE AWAY, SHE HEARD IT... WAY OFF IN THE DISTANCE... THE SOUND OF A DOG'S HAPPY BARKING.



JERRY! IT'S JERRY! HE'S
COMING BACK!

BETTY HELD HER BREATH! THE SOUND OF ROGER FEET PADDED ON THE PATH BELOW... AND BARKING EXPLODED THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR! JERRY CAME UP THE RICKETY STEPS AND INTO HER ROOM...



OH, JERRY! JERRY! WHERE HAVE
YOU BEEN? WHERE...

SUDDENLY BETTY OPEN BACK FROM THE PANTING DOG! A POUL DOOR FILLED THE ROOM! THE SMELL OF EARTH-DECAYED, SHAYEYANO EARTH! BETTY REACHED OUT INTO HER DARK WORLD... FEELING FOR THE DOG! A CRUDE OF MARCEL, CRAWLING SOIL DROPPED INTO HER OPEN HAND.



JERRY! WHERE HAVE
YOU BEEN?

BETTY DRUMS HER WHEEL-CHAIN AROUND! SOMEONE WAS COMING UP THE RICKETY STEPS! SLOWLY, PAINFULLY DRAGGING ONE LEG AFTER THE OTHER! THE BEDROOM DOOR SWUNG OPEN! IT STOOD PHANED IN THE DOORWAY! BETTY STAINED AT IT WITH BRIGHTNESS EYES.



ROGER?

SO WHO ELSE? YER, RODDER! IT WAS ROGER! DEAD ROGER, THAT IS! HOW WAST JERRY A LOYAL DOG? SIX FEET IS AN AWFUL LOT OF OMBING FOR SUCH TINY Paws! IT'S GOOD BETTY IS BLIND! SHE'S LUCKY SHE CAN'T SEE WHAT THE MUTT DRAGGED IN! BUT YOU CAN SEE SOMETHING HORRIBLE IF YOU WANT TO! MY FACE! NOT, I WEAR MY BACK HOOVES! AND... EVERY ONE IS AVAIL-ABLE! READ MY COLUMN, THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER, FOR INFO ON HOW TO GET YOURS! AND WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR!

THE END

**HEE-HEE! I'M GOING TO DO
LIKE THESE TWO GOOFY
GHOULUNATICS, AND GET MY
OWN SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ALL
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THE VAULT OF HORROR

FEATURING



THE VAULT CREATURE



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAMPIRE



THE VAULT OF HORROR!



WELL, HERE I 'BOW' WELCOME TO SEE YOU AGAIN! SINCE THE LAST TIME WE MET I'VE SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME PLOWING THROUGH MY PRIVATE COLLECTION OF HORROR TALES THAT I KEEP HERE IN *THE VAULT*... AND I'VE REALLY COME UP WITH A *DOOSY!* THIS STORY TAKES PLACE IN THE YEARS JUST BEFORE WORLD WAR I, AND TELLS A TERRIFYING TALE THAT OCCURRED IN ONE OF OUR NATION'S *GREAT CITIES!*

I CALL IT...

A STITCH IN TIME!



JAMMED TOGETHER IN A DIM, FOUL-SMELLING LOFT IN THE FACTORY DISTRICT, TEN GIRLS LEISURELY BENT OVER THEIR DANGEROUSLY OBSOLETE SEWING MACHINES... THE CLATTER OF WHICH FORTUNATELY MUFFLED THEIR ARMY MUTTERINGS FROM THE EARS OF THEIR EMPLOYER...

OH, HECK! MY
THREAD BROKE
AGAIN!

THESE MACHINES! A NEEDLE
BRAPPED OR WINE YESTERDAY,
NEARLY PUT MY EYE OUT!

SHOO-H



FOURTEEN HOURS
A DAY, SIX DAYS A
WEEK! AND ALL WE
GET IS SIX DOL-
LARS? IT'S
SLAVE LABOR!

THE *LEAST* MR.
LATCH COULD DO IS
GIVE US *SAFE*
MACHINES TO
WORK WITH!



I COULD DO WITH-
OUT SAFE MACHINES...
BUT I'M SURE WE
DESERVE MUCH
BETTER LIGHTING!
I'M GOING BLIND!

SLOWLY BUT SURELY
WE ALL ARE! BUT
THERE'S NO USE COM-
PLAINING! NOTHING
CAN BE DONE
ABOUT IT!



IF WE ALL
QUIT,
THAT WOULD
FIX MR.
LATCH!

NO...IF WE QUIT,
HE'D EASILY FIND
OTHERS WILLING
TO TAKE OUR
PLACES! AND
THEN WHERE
WOULD WE BE?



YOU'RE RIGHT!
TIMES ARE TOO
HARD! BUT IF
THINGS WERE
DIFFERENT...



WELL, THEY
AREN'T! THIS
SWEATSHOP
IS JUST ONE
BIG *DEATH*
TRAP!

I JUST DON'T
LIKE THE WAY
HE BULLIES
US... PUSHES
US AROUND!

SOME OF US
DO! BUT SOME-
DAY HE'LL GET
WHAT HE
DESERVES!
YOU WAIT
AND SEE!



I CERTAINLY
HOPE I'M AROUND
WHEN IT HAP-
PENS! I WOULDN'T
MISS IT FOR THE
WORLD!

I'D LIKE TO
SEE HIM GET
IT RIGHT NOW!

SH-HH-H!
HERE HE
COMES!



STOP FUMBLING! WHAT ARE YOU SO NERVOUS ABOUT? BE CAREFUL, THERE! IF YOU RUIN ANY WORK, I'LL TAKE IT OUT OF YOUR SALARY!

T-T-YEA, MR. LAGGH!



AND YOU! STOP WASTING TIME! YOU'RE MAKING ME LOSE MONEY! STUPID WOMEN. SIT HERE AND SODDUP ALL DAY LONG! WELL, I WANT PRODUCTION! I HEART!

ODDUP! T-YEE, MR. LAGGH!



MR. LAGGH... IF YOU DON'T MIND, I NEED ANOTHER SEWING NEEDLE...

WHAF? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU WOMEN ANYWAY? CAN'T YOU TAKE CARE OF ANYTHING?



BUT IT SNAPPED! IT FRACTURED MY HAND! I...

I DON'T CARE! IF YOU WANT ANOTHER NEEDLE, YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY FOR IT!



NOW GET BACK TO WORK! ...AND THE REST OF YOU STOP WASTING TIME! I WANT PRODUCTION! GET BUSY! I HEART!



THE DOOR CLAMMED SHUT BEHIND THE BELFISH MR. LAGGH, AND IN THE FACTORY ROOM ITSELF, AN ONIRIOUS HUSH PREVAILED. EACH GIRL WAS ALONE WITH HER THOUGHTS... AND YET THEIR THOUGHTS WERE AS ONE. THE CHATTER OF THE SEWING MACHINES ARGUMENTATED THE DIGITAL SILENCE...





MY HAND!
MY HAND!

GOOD LORD! HER
MACHINE
SHATTERED!
LOOK AT
HER HAND!



IT'S BADLY
HURT! CALL
A DOCTOR!

WHAT'S GOING
ON HERE?



MARTHA INJURED
HER HAND! THE
MACHINE BROKE
DOWN! SHE
SHOULD HAVE
A DOCTOR...

WHAT? MY
MACHINE IS
BROKEN?



YOU CLUMSY IDIOT! WHAT DO
YOU THINK THIS PLACE IS, A PLAY
ROOM IF I PAY YOU TO PRODUCE,
NOT TO FOOL AROUND, DAMAGING
MY PROPERTY?

BUT, MR.
LARCH! HER
HAND...



I DON'T CARE! JUST BECAUSE SHE
CAN'T WORK IS NO REASON FOR THE
REST OF YOU TO STOP! GET BACK
TO YOUR MACHINES!

OH, MY
HAND,
MY HAND!



DON'T YOU COME WHINING TO ME
FOR SYMPATHY! IT'S YOUR OWN
FAULT FOR BEING SO CARELESS!
IF YOU HAD BEEN PAYING ATTENTION
TO YOUR WORK, IT WOULDN'T HAVE
HAPPENED!

BUT, MR.
LARCH, THE
MACHINE IS
SO OLD! I DIDN'T...



BAR! NEGLIGENCE! IF YOU THINK
I'M GOING TO PAY TO HAVE THAT
MACHINE REPAIRED YOU'RE CRAZY!
THE COST IS COMING OUT OF YOUR
SALARY!

FOR? ALL
...ALL RIGHT,
MR. LARCH...
GOSH!



WELL, YOU CAN'T WORK ON THE MACHINE, AND DON'T TRY TO TELL ME YOU HAVE TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL! YOUR HAND IS ALL RIGHT! I'LL PUT YOU ON THE **SCRAP BOX!**

THE SCRAP BOX! OH, NO, MR. LATCH... PLEASE! NOT THAT MY HAND...



HORSEHEE! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANOTHER WORD! EITHER YOU WORK ON THE **SCRAP BOX**, OR I'LL **FIRE** YOU!

HEEN! ALL RIGHT... I'LL DO IT! (SING) I'LL DO IT! DON'T FIRE ME!



HEH, HEH! NOW ISN'T MR. LATCH A NICE, LIKEABLE EMPLOYER? I BET HE'S THE KIND OF PERSON YOU'D JUST **LOVE** TO GO TO WORK ON! ER... I MEAN, GO TO WORK **FOR** HEH, HEH! WELL, LET'S GET ON WITH THE STORY! AS THE SAYING GOES... "YOU AIN'T SEEN **NOTHING**" YET!"



THE SCRAP BOX WAS JUST WHAT ITS NAME IMPLIED...A BOX WHERE SCRAPS OF THREAD WERE THROWN FOR RE-USE! THE GIRL WHO 'WORKED' THE BOX HAD TO SORT THE BUTS OF THREAD, KNOT THEM TOGETHER, AND REEL THEM ONTO SPOOLS ACCORDING TO THE VARIOUS NEED...



THE SCRAP BOX WAS MORE OF A PUNISHMENT THAN ANYTHING ELSE, FOR THE ONE WHO 'WORKED' IT WAS FORCED TO SIT ALONE IN A CORNER, TO STRUGGLE WITH THE KNOTTED, TANGLED THREADS...AND VERY OFTEN THE GIRL'S PRYER NEEDED **SHAPPED** UNDER THE INTENSE STRAIN AND FRUSTRATION...



WHAT ARE YOU GIRLS GOING AWAY FROM YOUR MACHINES? YOU'RE HOLDING UP MY **PRODUCTION!** AND WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HER?

THE STRAIN WAS TOO MUCH FOR HER! SHE'S HAD A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN!





ALL RIGHT! I GAVE YOU A FAIR CHANCE! NOW YOU GO OUT! YOU'RE FIRED! GO ON! GET OUT OF HERE!

MR. LASCHE (1938) PLEASE



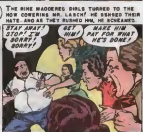
NOW, THE REST OF YOU CLUMSY FOOLS, GET *JUST*! I WANT PRODUCTION, I WANT IT! AND DON'T FEEL SORRY FOR THAT STUPID GIRL, I JUST FORGOT 'CAUSE THERE'S NO REASON FOR IT!



MY GOD! SHE'S BEEN RUN OVER BY THAT CAR!

SHE'S DEAD!

MR. LASCHE *KNEW* IT WASN'T SAFE TO LET HER OUT IN HER CONDITION! IT'S HIS FAULT!



THE NINE WADDENED GIRLS TURNED TO THE NOW COVERING MR. LASCHE! HE SENSED THEIR HATE, AND AS THEY RUSHED HIM, HE SCREAMED.

STAY AWAY! STOP! I'M SORRY! SORRY!

GET HIM!

MAKE HIM PAY FOR WHAT HE'S DONE!



IN A HOOK, THEY THROST THE TERRIFIED SHOP OWNER ONTO ONE OF THE SERIES MACHINES! THEY POUNDED HIM WITH FISTS, CLAWED AT HIS FLESH IN THEIR LUST FOR REVENGE -



FOR MANY MINUTES THEY CROWDED AROUND HIM. HIS SCREAMS CEASED, BUT HIS BODY CONTULSES AND SHOOK WITH SPASMS AS THE NINE GIRLS EXTRACTED THEIR VENGEANCE! SUDDENLY...

FIRE!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

IN A FEW MOMENTS THE GIRL HAD FLED! THE FLAMES LEAPED AND ROARED WITH FURY THROUGH THE TINDER-BOX SHOP... WHILE ON THE SEWING MACHINE A FIGURE STARED...



MR. LARSON STARED IN DUMBHOP... BUT HIS MOUTH MADE NO SOUND... FOR HIS LIPS HAD BEEN STITCHED TOGETHER!



WITH HIS FEET HOBBOLED AND HIS HANDS SEWN TOGETHER, HE STUMBLED CLIMBLY IN HIS FRANTIC ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE THE BLAZING INFERNO! SUDDENLY, HE STAMMERED INTO A ROW OF SHELVES... A LARGE SCRAP BOX CRASHED DOWN...



THE CHARLED THREADS GARGLED UPON HIM, ENTANGLING HIM IN A WEB OF HIS OWN MAKING! HIS PROGRESS STOPPED AND HIS STITCHED FINGERS SHOOK DESPERATELY TO FREE HIM OF THE EXSTINGUISHING THREADS...



SUPERNOATURALY, AS THE FIRE CLOSED IN AROUND HIM, HIS BODY TWISTED IN ACHT! THE SEARING FLAMES DREW NEARER AND THE WALLS AND ROOF BEGAN TO COLLAPSE! FROM BEHIND THE RAGGED STITCHING ON HIS LIPS, A BUZZLED DRY GURGLE AND DED IN HIS THROAT...



HEH, HEH, HEH! WELL, A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE... MINE GURGLE, THAT IS! HE WHO LARSON LARSON, LARSON BEST, THEY SAY... BUT DON'T LARSON LARSON, 'CAUSE HE AIN'T TALKIN' OR I BET THAT HAS NEEDLED YOU! ANYWAY, AT LEAST

MR. LARSON WASN'T THREAD-BARE... WHEN HE DIED! HEH, HEH! NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE GYFT-JEZEPP, WHO HAS ANOTHER ONE OF HIS FAIRY TALES FOR YOU! SEE, SEE! LONG FOR NOW! HEH, HEH, HEH!



- THE
END -

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

READY FOR ANOTHER HAIR-RAISING TERROR-TALE FROM MY VAST COLLECTION THAT I KEEP HERE IN MY CRYPT? GOOD! THEN COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! SIT DOWN NEXT TO YOUR HOST-IN-HORROR... THE CRYPT-KEEPER... AND I'LL BEGIN THE BLOOD-CURLING LITTLE TALE I CALL

99⁴⁴/₁₀₀% PURE HORROR!



ERNE SPRINKLES LAZER ON THE ORNATE CHAIR LOUNGE THAT STANDS ON THE TERRACE OF HIS PENTHOUSE APARTMENT! HE SMILES UP AT THE BLACK, STAR-STUDDED SKY AND SMIRKS! YES! LIFE HAD BEEN GOOD TO ERNE MATTHEW EVER SINCE HE'D BECOME MANAGER OF THE HUDSON SOAP FACTORY... EVER SINCE POOR OLD BENNY ANDERSON "MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARED"...

"YEP! THIS IS THE LIFE! TEN BEARS A YEAR! PLENTY OF WINE, WOMEN, AND... HOLY COW!"



ERNIE WITS UP SUDDENLY...
STARING AT HIS WATCH.

CRIPES! I ALMOST FORGOT!
I HAVE A DATE WITH THAT
SNOW GIRL TONIGHT! I'VE
JUST ENOUGH TIME TO
SHOWER AND DRESS!



SPRINGS FROM THE
WROUGHT IRON LOUNGE CHAIR,
ERNIE BARTS THROUGH THE
FRENCH DOORS INTO HIS
LAVISHLY FURNISHED APART-
MENT...

LET'S SEE! WHAT THE HELL
WAS HER NAME? I CAN'T
REMEMBER!



DROPPING THE THICKLY CAR-
PETED LIVING ROOM, INTO THE
MODERNISTIC BEDROOM, ERNIE
SPRINTS! QUICKLY, HE UN-
DRESSSES AND STEPS INTO THE
NICELY TILED BATH-
ROOM.

THAT'S FUNNY! SHE
TOLD ME HER NAME'ON.
WELL, I'LL THINK OF
IT... WHAT THE...?



ERNIE STARES DOWN AT THE EMPTY SLEAM-
ING SOAP-DISH...

HEE! HOW CAN I TAKE A SHOWER WITHOUT
ANY SOAP? WONDER IF THERE'S
ANOTHER CASE IN THE
PANTRY?



ERNIE DOWNS A ROSE AND ENDORESSES THE LIV-
ING ROOM TO THE HEAT LITTLE KITCHEN!
HE SWINGS OPEN THE PANTRY DOORS, HIS
EYES SEARCHING THE CANNULIN SHELVES...

THAT'S A RECK OF A NOTE!
ME, THE MANAGER OF THE
HUDSON SOAP FACTORY...
WITHOUT A CASE OF SOAP
IN THE HOUSE...EXCEPT...
EXCEPT...



A COLD SHIVER RUNS UP ERNIE'S SPINE!
HE MAKES HIS WAY SLOWLY TO A SMALL
CABINET IN THE LIVING ROOM! FROM A RING
OF KEYS, HE SELECTS ONE AND CAREFULLY
INSERTS IT INTO THE LOCK ON THE CABINET
DOOR! THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN! THE CAB-
INET IS FILLED WITH SMALL RECTANGULAR
PACKAGES...

...EXCEPT FOR THESE BARS OF SOAP!
...I NEVER INTENDED TO USE
THESE!



SUDDENLY ERNIE BURSTS OUT LAUGHING! HE
REACHES INTO THE CABINET AND PULLS OUT
ONE OF THE BAIT WRAPPED PACKAGES...

AND! WHAT DO I CARE NOW, BERNY!
I GOT YOUR JOB! NO ONE'S THE WISER!
WHAT'S THE USE OF RAHSHIR ON
TO THEM NOW!



AS ERNIE SHUFFLED BACK ACROSS THE FLOOR LIVING ROOM, UNWRAPPING THE CASE OF SOAP, THE SOUND OF A TRUCK HORN BELCHES UP FROM THE STREET BELOW! THE SOUND IS A FAMILIAR ONE TO ERNIE! THREE YEARS AGO... WHEN HE FIRST STARTED TO WORK AT THE MID-SOAP FACTORY, IT HEARD...



BENNY ANDERSON WAS MANAGER OF THE FACTORY BACK THEN! ERNIE'S JOB WAS TO UNLOAD THE TRUCKS HEADED RISE WITH SCRAP MEAT THAT HAD BEEN COLLECTED FROM BUTCHER SHOPS AND RESTAURANTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY! ERNIE HATED THE WORK.



EVEN SMALL OLD BEATING SCRAP MEAT, SUGGEST IF YOU HAVE, YOU KNOW WHY ERNIE HATES HIS JOB! SOMETIMES THE SMALL WAS *SO* BAD...



BUT ERNIE'S STUCK TO IT... AND AFTER A FEW MONTHS, HE WAS PROMOTED TO THE BUBBLING YATS.



LISTEN, YOU! CALL ME MR. ANDERSON, NOT THAT 'BENNY' STUFF! I HAD TO BE THE BOSS HERE!



THE BUBBLING YATS WERE HUGE CHILDRONS INTO WHICH THE SCRAP MEAT WAS PLACED! THEN THE VATS WERE FILLED WITH WATER...



AFTER THE WATER IN THE VATS CAME TO A BOIL, THE FAT AND OIL IN THE MEAT ROSE TO THE SURFACE OF THE BUBBLING LIQUID.



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THEN THE WATER WAS DRAINED OFF FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE MASSIVE ROLLING KETTLES, AND THE REMAINING MOLTER FLATS AND CILS WERE SAPONIFIED.

GRAB! ADD THE LIFE!

YES, SIR!

THE RAW SOAP WAS PER-FUMED AND RUN OUT ONTO COLD ROLLERS WHERE IT SOLIDIFIED! THE HARDENED SOAP WAS THEN FLARED OFF THE ROLLERS AND PRESSED INTO THE FAMILIAR SOAP CASE.

G'WHOW! LET'S KEEP IT MOVING! LET'S GET THOSE CASES TO THE WRAPPING MACHINE!

ERRIE DESPISED BERRY ANDERSON! BERRY WAS CONSTANTLY ON HIS HECK... MAKING IT TOUGH FOR ERRIE...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN! YOU WENT OUT FOR A SMOKE? I'LL TELL YOU WHEN YOU CAN TAKE A BREAK!

DEAR... DEAR...

BUT IN SPITE OF BERRY ANDERSON'S CONSTANT NAGGING, ERRIE CONTINUED TO ADVANCE HIMSELF IN THE HUDSON SOAP FACTORY! SOON, HE BECAME ASSISTANT MANAGER.

SO NOW YOU'RE MY ASSISTANT, ER, BERRY? WELL, YOU'D BETTER KEEP ON THE BALL!

DON'T WORRY, BERRY! I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO GET RID OF ME!

IT LOOKED LIKE ERRIE HAD MOVED UP ABOUT AS HIGH AS HE COULD GO IN THE FACTORY! AS OLD MR. HUDSON PUT IT:

SURE, ERRIE! I KNOW YOU'RE A CAPABLE WORKER! BUT WHAT UNDERSTAND, ER, BERRY? ANDERSON'S JOB WOULD BE YOUR NEXT STEP! BUT HE'S NOT LEAVING!

YEAH! I UNDERSTAND, MR. HUDSON.

THE OLD MAN WAS RIGHT! BERRY'D BEEN THERE FOR YEARS! HE WASN'T LEAVING! BERRY'D NEVER BECOME MANAGER...UNLESS...

...UNLESS SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HIM! WHAT IF HE...JUST...DISAPPEARED?

ERRIE MADE UP HIS MIND! HE WAS GOING TO KILL BERRY ANDERSON! IT WOULD BE EASY... VERY EASY! ONE NIGHT... AFTER THE FACTORY WAS DESERTED... ERRIE RETURNED! BERRY'D STAYED TO CHECK THE INVENTORY.

WHAT WAS THAT? WHO, WHO'S THERE? OH... IT'S YOU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING... HERE... THIS TIME OF... ERRIE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT KNIFE?

ERNIE SMOGNET THE SOAP DOWN... AGAIN AND AGAIN... UNTIL BERRY'S LIFELESS BODY LAY COVERED WITH SOUP! THEN HE CARRIED THE COMFEE TO THE BENDING YATE...

THERE'LL BE *NOTHING LEFT* OF YOU WHEN I'M THROUGH, BERRY!



IT TOOK ERNIE ALMOST AN HOUR TO DISMEMBER BERRY'S BODY! THEN HE FILLED THE YAT WITH WATER AND FIBRE IT.

...AND WHEN YOU DON'T SHOW UP FOR WORK FOR A FEW DAYS, I'LL BE MANAGER OF THE HUDSON SOAP FACTORY!



AFTER THE WATER CAME TO A BOIL, ARE THE FATS AND OILS GATHERED ON THE SURFACE, ERNIE OPENED THE DRAIN-OFF VALVE AND THE REMOVED REMAINS OF BERRY ANDERSON WERE RUN OFF INTO THE WASTE SINK WHERE THEY MIXED WITH THE REST OF THE DAY'S REMOVED SOAP.

TOMORROW MORNING, SHEET AND EARLY, THEY'LL *EMPT* THIS SINK AND CART IT AWAY...



THEN ERNIE CONTINUES THE SOAP-MAKING PROCESS WITH THE FATS AND OILS REMOVED FROM BERRY'S REMAINS...

HEH, HEH! LOOK AT YOU, BERRY! LOOK AT YOU *NOW*! JUST A COUPLE SOFTEN Cakes OF SOAP!



AT FIRST, ERNIE'S PLANNED ON *DESTROYING* THE CANS OF SOAP THAT HAD BEEN MADE FROM BERRY'S DISMEMBERED COMFEE... BUT A WEIRD, STRANGE FASCINATION MADE HIM DECIDE...

NO! I WON'T THROW THEM AWAY! I'LL KEEP THEM... TO *REMEMBER* YOU BY!



AND SO ERNIE WATSON BECAME MANAGER OF THE HUDSON SOAP FACTORY! AND WITH HIS PROMOTION, CAME THE FABULOUS SALARY THAT SOON BROUGHT HIM THE CLOSER, LUX-URIOUS APARTMENT, AND THE HALO LIFE HE'D ALWAYS WANTED...

HEH, HEH TO YOU, BERRY! THANKS... FOR *EVERYTHING*!



NOW ERNIE SHUFFLES INTO THE RICHLY TRIMMED GLASS BATHROOM... THE CANS OF SOAP IN HIS HAND...

WARRING! THAT'S HER NAME! NOW I REMEMBER! WHAT A CONSCIOUS CASE!



ERNE STEPS INTO THE BLACK-
TAILED STALL SHOWER AND
SLIPS THE CASE OF SOAP INTO
THE WALL RECEPTACLE! CAU-
TIOUSLY HE TURNS THE FAU-
CETS, ADJUSTING THE TEMPER-
ATURE OF THE WATER.

GOTTA BE CAREFUL! THEY
CERTAINLY BEND UP SCALING
HOT WATER IS THIS JOINT!



WITH THE TEMPERATURE OF
THE SHOWER SPRAY TO HIS
LIKING, ERNE BEGINS TO SOAP
HIMSELF. WORKS UP A
FOAMY LATHER.

TUM-TA-TUM-OO-OUM-SUM!
MY HEART. CRUEL FOR YOU.
OUM-TA-SUM. SUM-OO-UM!



SUDDENLY, ERNE'S EYES BEGIN
TO ITCH! POOLISHLY, HE LIFTS
A SOAPY HAND TO RUB THEM.



THE SOAP IN HIS EYES IS LIKE ACID! THE
PAIN IS EXAGGERATED! ERNE DROPS THE BAR
OF SOAP...REACHING FOR THE FAUCET...

MY EYES! THEY'RE BURNING!



BLISSO! ERNE FUMBLES FOR THE FAUCETS!
HIS HAND CLOSES ON ONE! HE TURNS IT.

OH, LORD! THAT'S THE COLD
WATER I'VE SHUT OFF!



FEARFULLY, ERNE REACHES THROUGH THE
SCALDING STREAM OF WATER, TRIES TO FIND
THE HOT WATER FAUCET...

OWWW! SHAT IT! IT'S TOO HOT! MY
EYES! MUST GET OUT OF HERE...



ERNE TURNS, STILL NOT ABLE TO SEE, AND
REACHES FOR THE STALL SHOWER SOGE HAN-
DLE! BUT SOMETHING SLIPY ERNE FEELS
BENEATH HIS FOOT.



ERNE LAYS SPRAWLED ON THE SMOOTH FLOOR OF THE STALL SHOWER. HIS RIGHT LEG HORRIBLY DISTORTED AND TWISTED...



THE SCALDING SHOWER OF HOT WATER POURS DOWN UPON THE CRUMPLED, SCREAMING FIGURE



ERNE, HIS EYES TORTURED WITH THE BURNING SOAP SUDS... HIS LEG PAINFULLY BROKEN...THE SCALDING WATER STREAMING DOWN ON HIM...TRIES IN VAIN TO REACH FOR THE SHOWER SOCK! HE CANNOT LOCATE IT! IT LIES JUST BEYOND HIS REACHES THINER TIPS.



SLOWLY, THE STEAMING WATER BEGINS TO FILL UP THE STALL SHOWER. HIS HEAD UP THE THRASHING FIGURE UNTIL IT REACHES HIS BOLT-RED FACE.



WITH ONE LAST PAIN-WRACKED EFFORT ERNE TRIES TO SET UP... BUT HIS BROKEN LEG COLLAPSES AND HE SINKS BELOW THE SURFACE OF THE WATER FILLING THE STALL SHOWER...



WHEN THE SUPERINTENDANT INVESTIGATED THE COMPLAINT THAT THE CEILING OF THE SHOWER-ROOM BELOW ERNE'S WAS DRIPPING WATER, HE FOUND THE WATER-FILLED STALL SHOWER WITH ERNE'S BARE-LOOKING DEAD BODY...



HEH, HEH! YEP! ERNE WAS LATE FOR HIS DATE THAT NIGHT! WELL... THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED WHEN A MURDERER WANTS TO GO TO CLEAN SO HE REALLY FINALLY WORKED HIMSELF INTO A LATHER AND GOT HIS REVENGE. WHO ALL I CAN SAY IS MORE POWDER TO HIS... SOAP POWDER... THAT IS!



HERE'S A TALE THAT'S A REAL HAIR-RAISER!
IT OUGHT TO RATE TOPS WITH YOU! I CALL IT..

DEAD WAIT!



THE TROPIC NIGHT HUNG OVER THE ISLAND LIKE A
WET BLANKET, HOT AND OPPRESSIVE! FROM OUT
ACROSS THE BLACK PACIFIC, A FAINT SMOKE SPRING
MOVING LAZILY THROUGH THE TOWERING COCONUT
PALMS! THE PLANTATION HOUSE LAY SILENT
BENEATH THE STARRY SKY! SUDDENLY TWO SHOTS
RANG OUT...



RED SULKILY STOOD OVER THE PROSTRATE BODY OF
HIS FORMER BOSS, THE PLANTATION OWNER, EVEL
BUNNEL! A TINY WHISP OF SMOKE DRIFTED UPWARD
FROM THE BLACK MUZZLE OF THE AUTOMATIC THAT
'RED' HELD FIRMLY IN HIS HAND. STILL POINTED
AT THE DEAD FRENCH PLANTER...



BEHIND THE RED-HEADED ELMCHEN, A SMALL COAL-BLACK NATIVE GRINNED IN THE SHADOWS, WATCHING WITH WIDE EYES! BUCKLEY STEPPED OVER DUAL'S BODY AND MOVED TO A SMALL SAFE IN THE WALL OF THE PLANTATION HOUSE.

HOW? RIGHT, TEN... LEFT TO SIX. NIGHT CAME TO TEN...

THE DOOR OF THE SAFE OPENED, AND HE REACHED IN... **"FOUR YEARS I'VE WAITED. FOUR YEARS. AND NOW IT'S MINE!"**

"RED" HELD THE VELVET-BLACK SPHERE UP SO THAT THE LIGHT FROM THE KEROSENE LAMP DANCED OVER ITS GLEAMING SURFACE.

FINALLY... **THE BLACK PEARL IS MINE! LOOK AT IT, BUCKLEY! THERE IS NO PEARL IN THE WHOLE WORLD LIKE THIS ONE!**

THE DOWNING NATIVE STARED AT THE PEARL FROM HIS HIDING PLACE IN THE SHADOWS! THE SHINE OF HIS EYES SHONE BRIGHTLY, REFLECTING THE GLOW OF THE FLICKERING LAMP.

WHAT ARE YOU FRIGHTENED OF, BUCKLEY? DUAL IS DEAD! STOP CRIMING LIKE A FRIGHTENED MURDERER! COME OUT OF THERE! HERE... **LOOK AT IT! MY BLACK PEARL!**

THE NATIVE SHUFFLED FORWARD... HIS EYES GLUED TO THE SMALL BLACK SPHERE THAT "RED" HELD BETWEEN HIS FINGERS! HE STUDIED IT FOR A MOMENT... THEN EXCLAIMED:

COME, MISSAN BUCKLEY! WE SO NOT BOAT READY! WE GO... **HURRY-HURRY!** YES, BUCKLEY! LET'S GO! MY BUSINESS HERE IS FINISHED!

"RED" TOOK A LAST LOOK AT THE DEAD PLANTER SPOT, AND FOLLOWED THE NATIVE OUT THE DOOR! THE TWO FIGURES MOVED SILENTLY BOWS TO THE BEACH WHERE A NATIVE OUTRIGGER CANOE WAS TIED UP ON THE WHITE SANDS.

NOT ENOUGH FOOD AND WATER, BUCKLEY?

YES, MISSAN! NOT PLenty.

BUCKLEY CLIMBED INTO THE OUTRIGGER AND PAUL SHROUDED OFF INTO THE GROWING SUEP.

WELL, BUCKLEY IS THREE DAYS' WE'LL BE IN BAMBAL! AND I'LL BE CATCHING THAT STEAMER, OH!

THREE DAYS? TADA, MISSAN BUCKLEY!



As the outboarder swarmed over the crests of the incoming breakers, Ned watched the flickering lights of the plantation-house fade into the night! It had been four years ago that he'd first seen the lights of the plantation shining through the mist.

THERE SHE IS! MR. BUCKLEY!
THAT'S MY PLANTATION!

LOOKS OKAY, MR.
DUVAL!



Ned's approached the jovial
looking Frenchman and intro-
duced himself.

20. NED! BUCKLEY!
AND WHAT CAN I
DO FOR YOU?

I'D LIKE A
JOB, MR. DUVAL!
I'LL DO
ANYTHING!



Duval's been thrilled at
having another white man
on the island with him! He's
jumped at the chance.

WELL, DUVAL!
OH, YEAH! I
PLAY A FEW
GAMES!

YOU'RE
Hired,
NED!



Duval's plantation was located
on one of the many islands that
made up the group known as the
Boe Islands. The plantation itself
was worked by natives of the
surrounding islands.

IT SEE GOOD TO
HAVE A WHITE
MAN ON NATIAN
AGAIN!

IT'S GOOD
TO BE
HERE,
DUVAL!



Duval's been sick with some tropical disease!
That was why he'd been detained getting down
to business! And that was why he'd hired Ned!
The fever'd left his weak! Ned could take over the
physical work of running the plantation for
him.

YOU'VE GOT TO BE
Tough ON THESE
NATIVES, NED!
THEY ARE LAZY!

DON'T WORRY, DUVAL! I'LL
MAKE 'EM TOE THE LINE!



Ned's waited three months in Bangkok for Duval
to show up! He's spent almost a year tracing
the fabulous black pearl to this French planter.

YOU SURE HE'LL
BE HERE? IT'S BEEN
ALMOST THREE MONTHS!

I'M TELLIN' YOU, MR. BUCKLEY!
DUVAL COMES DOWN HERE
FROM HIS ISLAND TO BUY
PROVISIONS REGULARLY! HE
DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY HE
AIN'T BEEN HERE - OH-OK!
THERE HE COMES NOW!



Duval and Buckley's become quite friendly in
the year that followed! Finally, one night, Ned'd
worked the conversation around to precious
pearls.

GIVE ME AN EMBELL
ANY TIME, DUVAL!
THAT'S REAL
BEAUTY!

NO, NED! YOU HAVE NOT
SEEN REAL BEAUTY UNTIL
YOU HAVE SEEN A
BLACK PEARL!





BLACK PEARL...
DUNAL! YOU'VE
SEEN ONE?

OH, M'HEU!
I HAVE...
SEEN ONE!



DUNAL'S TRIED TO HUNT DVAL
BUT THE OLD FRESHMAN
SLAMMED UP THAT WAS ALL HE'D
SAID ABOUT THE BLACK PEARL. RED
WAS SURE HE OWNED THAT ONE
RIGHT.

WHO'S OUT THERE?
COME OUT OF THOSE
SHEDS OR I'LL
SHOOT!

NO
SHOOT,
DUNAL!



THAT'S BEEN WALKY! HE'S BEEN
HANGING AROUND BUCKLEY'S BAR-
GALLOP...

WHAT WERE YOU
GOING OUT THERE?

NEAR NO HARM.
BUNAL! BUNAL
BE HOUSE-BOY...
SERVANT, ANYTHING
...TO YOU, BUNAL!

KUL'D PLEADED WITH RED TO LET HIM STAY! HE
WANTED TO BE RED'S SERVANT! RED'S FINALLY SAID OK.



GRAY, KUL? YOU CAN STAY!
BUT KEEP OUT OF MY HAIR, SEE?

THANKS, BUNAL!
THANKS!



YOU ASKED ME ONCE EFF I
EVER SAW A BLACK PEARL,
M'HEU? YOU REMEMBER?

YEAH, DUNAL!
I REMEMBER!



WELL, M'HEU! NOT ONLY
HAVE I SEEN ONE...
I OWN ONE!

YOU DO? WHERE?
LET ME SEE IT!



OH, NO, M'HEU! THE PEARL IS
WORTH A FORTUNE! WE ARE
TWO MEN ALONE ON THREE
ISLAND! IT WOULD BE FOOLISH
FOR ME TO TELL YOU WHERE
I KEEP IT! NOT THAT I
DON'T FORGET YOU...

OH, YEAH? I
DON'T BLAME
YOU, DUNAL!
I'D DO THE
SAME THING!
FORGET IT!

ANOTHER YEAR'S GONE BY BEFORE
RED'S FINALLY FOUND OUT...

SEE THAT PICTURE...
THERE ON THE WALL...
H'BIEN?

YEAH!

BEHIND IT IS A SAFE!
THAT IS WHERE I
KEEP THE BLACK
PEARL!

SEE, DONALD!
I'D REALLY
LIKE TO SEE
IT!

NO, H'BIEN!
TEMPTATION
IS A GREAT...

TELL YOU WHAT,
DONALD! YOU HOLD
A GUN ON ME ALL
THE WHILE! THEN
I WON'T TRY ANY
THING!

DONALD'S FALLEN FOR IT! HE'S GONE TO THE SAFE...
LOADED GUN IN HAND... AND TAKEN OUT THE BLACK
PEARL...

IT'S BEAUTIFUL,
DONALD! LOOKS
LIKE IT'S WORTH
A FORTUNE!

AT LEAST A QUARTER OF A
MILLION, H'BIEN!

BUT RED'S GOTTEN THE INFORMATION HE'D WANTED!
HE'D REMEMBERED THE COMBINATION OF THE SAFE!
NOW ALL THAT WAS LEFT WAS TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS
FOR A RETURN.

WHAT WOULD I DO, HALL, IF
I WANTED TO GET AWAY FROM
THIS PLACE AND GET TO
SANGHAI?

TAKE MISSAN DONALD'S
MOTOR LAUNCH,
MISSAN HUELEY!
THAT'S HOW HE GO
ALLA TIME.

NO, DONALD! I MEAN IF I
WANTED TO GET TO SANGHAI
SECRETLY... WITHOUT
ATTRACTING ATTENTION!

I COULD TAKE YOU
THERE IN MY OWN
CANOE... MISSAN!
TRIP LONG... THREE
DAYS MAYBE...

EVERYTHING WAS SET! RED'D WAITED FOR THE
ANNUAL STEAMER TO COME TO SANGHAI! THEN FOUR
DAYS BEFORE...

SEE THAT OUTRIGGER, HALL!
WE'LL BEER IT... TOHIGHT!

YERRAN,
MISSAN!

AND NOW IT WAS OVER! RED HAD THE PEARL AND KULU WAS PADDLING HIM TOWARD BARBAI! THE LIGHTS OF DUVAL'S PLANTATION WERE GONE NOW.

LOOK AT IT, KULU! THERE'S NO PEARL IN THE WHOLE WORLD LIKE THIS ONE! AND I WORKED LONG, TOO... FOUR YEARS... TO GET IT!

KULU REMAINED SILENT! HE STARED OUT OVER THE VAST EXPANSE OF WATER AS RED PAVED ON.

I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU *MUNE* AROUND AS LONG AS YOU DO, KULU! I TREATED YOU PRETTY ROUGH SOMETIMES!

KULU DID NOT ANSWER! UP AHEAD, DANCING LIGHTS PIN-POINTED THE SMOON.

THAT'S BETTER, KULU! YOU *SORE* AT ME? DON'T WORRY! I'LL PAY YOU OFF IN BARBAI! I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU! I'LL...*MUNE*!

FAINTLY, BUT GROWING EVER STEADY LOUDER...THE THROB OF DRUMS DRIFTED ACROSS THE TOSING BLACK EXPANSE.

WHAT'S THAT, KULU? *DRUMS*? NATIVE *DRUMS*? WE'RE HEADED TOWARD THEM! KULU? WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?

THE ISLAND LOOMED UP BEFORE THEM! THE FIRES LIT UP THE BEACH...ILLUMINATING THE GLEANING, DANCING FIGURES! SUCKLEY SPUN AROUND! KULU STOOD OVER HIM...THE MACHETE IN HIS HAND REFLECTING THE FIRE-LIGHT.

KULU! MY GOD! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I WAIT LONG TIME TOO, MRS. SUCKLEY!

THE BEARING STEEL BLADE CAME DOWN WITH LIGHTENING SPEED...SEVERING "RED" SUCKLEY'S HEAD FROM HIS SHOULDERS...CUTTING SHORT HIS BLOOD-CURDLED PRYER...

FAAAAA-

THACK!

THE SHRIKING NATIVES GATHERED AROUND KULU AS HE HELD THE HEAD WITH THE RED HAIR HIGH FOR ALL OF THEM TO SEE! AND AS THEY GAZED AT IT, HE GRASSED IN HIS NATIVE TONGUE...

THREE YEARS I WAIT...AND NOW, IT IS *WINE*! THERE IS NO HEAD IN ALL THE BOZLAS LIKE THIS ONE!

HEH, HEH! YEA, KIDDES! THAT'S THE STORY! RED *DON'T* USE HIS HEAD! IF HE HAD, HE WOULD HAVE REALIZED THAT HE AND KULU WERE WORKIN THE SAME RACKET...GETTING INTO A POSITION OF TRUST IN ORDER TO GET SOMETHING THEY WANTED!

WELL, THAT BOTH SUCCEEDED...ONLY KULU WAS JUST A LITTLE AHEAD OF THE GAME! AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THAT RAB, THE OLD WITCH...FOR HER HORROR FARM!

The VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Yo, my bedeviled geek-a-soldier! Looky here what the old Vault-Keeper has had to put up with since last we visited. Some of you letter writers are downright sick. Please, park yourselves on a nice damp slab and help yourselves to a piping hot Reper of hot squealer's while we wade through this issue's slough of despond:

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I have numbers one and two of your comics. They are cool! "Star Light, Star Bright," "Smoke Wings," "Silver Threads Among the Moat," "Bloodily From Hunger," "The Trick I Kall You," "Midnight Mass," and "Bedtime Gory" were COOL! I can't wait for future issues.

Nash Polomy
Evergreen, CO

You think our stories are "cool," eh? Well, we're this Vault! As a matter of fact, it's downright freezing in here! Fortunately, the Old Witch and I haven't had nerve endings for so long that it doesn't really matter.

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I don't like starting off my letters on a sentimental note, but I LOVE YOU DUMB! I think you're right Y.K., why does G.K. get all the fans? He even has a TV show named after him. Personally, I think you are the best host, with your mixture of wit and delightful cannibalistic recipes. It's all so... so... [amazing!] By the way, could you make a recipe for a young, slightly overweight, 13-year-old boy? I have this brother, you see. Perhaps the Old Witch has something she'd share.

Stephen Pazio
San Diego, CA

The Old Witch gave me a few recipes as per your request. "Blizdy" Toodle on a Stick" sounds good, but it's awful grossy. (It could make you break-out... but there wouldn't be much point in that unless you were in prison, eh?) Of course I could suggest a personal favorite, "Brother's Brisket," which is buttered and deep fried. It's very filling but a lot of work. You might want to let the that geat of a brother of yours live and get him addicted to our fine comic books. Then you'd have something to recommend.

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Once again you've proved your superiority over the boring Crypt-Keeper. But praising you is not why I'm writing this letter. I just had to voice my opinion concerning the myth that the Old Witch is a better talent than you are! If anyone thinks that you are not on the same wavelength as the Old Witch, then they are naturally ill! They should be looked up in one of your dreary

vaults, then you can torture them until you get the truth out. The truth being you're the greatest dead storyteller anyone ever knew!

Tannerian Davi
Philadelphia, PA

Oh stop! (Gush!) I only do what any self-respecting Vault-Keeper does, and that's tell better stories than anyone, alive or dead!

Dear Vault-Keeper,

The revival of your mag is the best thing that has happened in years. I'm a 24-year-old E.C. fanatic. I've acquired some of the original mags and purchased a hardback volume. Not only are you pleasing to old fans, but you're getting new ones too! So far some of us the stories are new. By the way Y.K., I see you don't have Drusilla around the Vault anymore. Need another lady to tell her place, tell, grotesque, and classy? (Hint, hint) See ya next month! Oh, and remember that G.K. and G.W. can't come close to YOUR stories! It's the host of the stories that help make them so entertaining to us fiend fans!

Laura Martin
Aurora, IL

P.S.: I mix wonderful Bat Bites and Bloody Marys!

Thanks a gobs for your kind words, Laura! I do like the Bloody Marys, but my favorite drink is Bolt-her-Mothers with a twist of spine. (My chiropractor recommended it) Yes, Drusilla is gone it seems. It's so hard to keep good help alive these days. I will consider your offer, though. Of course, you couldn't possibly be "classy" and still work for me!

Hey Y.K.:

I was reading your first mag, and you screwed up! Hal Hal in "Smoke Wings" you misspelled "gaily." I hope you know you put "galy" in your mag. HAI HAI HAI! You also printed Laura when her name was Lorna. HAI HAI HAI!

Abe Farnsbecker
Arnold, MD

P.S.: I hope the old Crypt-Keeper finds this funny.

Wow, Abe, what eyes you got! I guess some people have a pretty low threshold when it comes to humor HAI HAI I guess I was thinking of Laura Martin HAI HAI Hope our next issue makes you laugh your head off HAI HAI Anyway, as long as you're READING our fine magazine, find all the mistakes you want, we'll make more! HAI HAI!

Aha! Before we start having too much fun here, I think now is a good time to sign off for this issue. As the rock said to the moose on his back, "Thanks for 'Lichen' me!" If you've found that I've grown on you, don't hesitate a moment; grab a hunk of parchment and drop a line to:

The Vault-Keeper's Corner

P.O. Box 2079 • Prescott, AZ 86302 • (602) 776-1300

A RARE E.C. OFFER

Seventeen years ago a small publishing company called East Coast Comics reprinted a number of the original EC's in full color as regular 32-page comic books. Without national distribution the material was not able to sustain their continuation. Shortly after they ceased production we bought the remaining small inventory, realizing they would become real collector's items someday. With the return of E.C. through Gladstone, that day has come! None of these 1973 and '74 reprints is scheduled to be duplicated by Gladstone before 1992 and some later than that. The Shock SuspenStories comics have no place on our schedule at the present time. The following are available individually or as a lot while the very limited supply lasts.



- ☐ **WEIRD SCIENCE 18, Sept., 1952** \$8.99
Incredible issue, with the first E.C. story by Al Williamson, who quickly becomes a favorite, and "The Martians," one of Wallace Wood's best. Also, a photo and biography of Joe Orlando, who draws captive earthmen in "Bull Steer."
- ☐ **Shock SuspenStories 12, Dec., 1953** \$8.99
Drug abuse is dealt with for one of the first times in comics in the powerful Joel Orlando effort, "The Monkey." Reed Crandall's "The Kidnapper" generated mail from angry parents. Wally Wood touches off suicide in "The Fat Guy." And a murderous alcoholic is portrayed in "Deadline" by Jack Kamen.
- ☐ **The Haunt of Fear 12, Mar., 1952** \$8.99
Two horror corpse stories highlight an issue of great art by "Creepy" Graham Ingels and Jack Davis. Johnny Craig has a story, biography and a photo. His story of a love triangle involves two shootings and a mysterious letter that minutiously implicates the killer.
- ☐ **WEIRD FANTASY 13, May, 1952** \$8.99
Special issue with two tales illustrated by Wallace Wood, including "Home to Stay," an unforgettable adaptation of two Ray Bradbury short stories. E.C.'s science fiction and horror editor/artist Al Feldstein has a bio with photo.
- ☐ **Crime SuspenStories 35, Oct., 1954** \$8.99
Jack Kamen's lead deals with multiple murder; Reed Crandall's story involves a knife and some "cutting up" during a prison break; Bernie Krigstein's effort chronicles madness; and George Evans' yarn weaves brutal fiction of a sadistic police lieutenant.
- ☐ **The Haunt of Horror 26, Aug., 1958** \$8.99
Putrid populations of a ghoul and a vampire in love, werewolves, twisting corpses and a voodoo curse are all rendered in color by Johnny Craig, Jack Davis, Sid Check and Graham Ingels.
- ☐ **Shock SuspenStories 6, Nov., 1952** \$8.99
One story each of crime, suspense, sci-fi and horror plus a biography and photo of fan favorite Wally Wood. Graham Ingels illustrates a rare appearance of the Old Witch out side the horror titles. Wood's "Under Cover" is a shocker dealing with overt prejudice that was largely ignored in society in the 1950s. Great issue!
- ☐ **The Haunt of Fear 28, Jan., 1954** \$8.99
Jack Kamen does one of his famous "Grim" Fairy tale this time a horrific version of Hansel and Gretel. A cat brooding, beautifully drawn Jack Davis swamp tale and werewolf story are also featured.
- ☐ **A full set of the eight classics shown above, while all are still available:** \$44.99

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Rare E.C. Offer • Bruce Hamilton • P.O. Box 4235 • Prescott, AZ 86302

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

WEE, WEE! WELL, THE FIRE'S LIT UNDER MY CAULDRON AGAIN, SO COME INTO THE HARRY OF FEAR! YEA... IT'S ME... THE OLD WITCH... READY TO DISH OUT ANOTHER OF MY DRAFT CONCOCTIONS OF DANGEROUS COMPOUNDS DEALING WITH DISGRACE BELONGING INTO THE DEEPERNESS! EVERYBODY READY? GOOD! THEN I'LL BEGIN THE MAD WORK OF MORTUITY I CALL...

STAIRED...
IN HORROR!



LENA LEECHMAN STARED DOWN AT THE GRAVE OF HER LATE HUSBAND! A GROTESQUE SMILE CURLED OVER HER HARD-LOOKING FACE! THE BITING NOVEMBER WIND SWEEP ACROSS THE WOUNDS OF BROWNING GRASS... WHISTLING BETWEEN THE SILENT HEADSTONES! THERE WAS A CRISP CRUNCHING SOUND ON THE GRAVEL PATH BEHIND HER! LENA TURNED.

OH! I, I'M AWFULLY SORRY, MAM! I DON'T MEAN TO... INTERRUPT...

THAT'S ALL RIGHT - I WAS JUST LEAVING ANYWAY!



INMA EYES THE MILD-FACED
NEWLY ARRIVED GENTLEMAN!
HIS EYES WERE SOFT AND
GLAZED! INMA EXPECTED HIM
TO BURST OUT CRYING ANY
MINUTE! THEN SHE NOTICED
THE GRAVE BEHIND HER LATE
HUSBAND'S! THE MOORS WAS
BARE...THE HEADSTONE FIRM
AND GRIM! SHE NODDED
TOWARD IT...

TOURS? YES! MY WIFE!
SHE DIED ABOUT A
MONTH AGO!
I... I COME HERE
EVERY SUNDAY!



INMA STIFLED THE DESIRE
TO GIGGLE AT THE GENTLE-
MENTAL OLD FOOL! THIS
WAS THE FIRST TIME SHE'D
VISITED HERMAN'S GRAVE
SINCE HM... *DEATH!* THE OLD-
EYES MAN NODDED TOWARD
HERMAN'S GRAVE.

MY HUSBAND,
ONES ABOUT SIX
MONTHS AGO!
I... I'VE BEEN
AWAY!



YES! I FELT
FERFABLE
ABOUT NOT
BEING ABLE
TO COME
FOR THE
LAST FIVE
YEARS!

OH! THAT'S
WHY I HAVEN'T
SEEN YOU HERE
BEFORE!



SERVANTS! INMA STOOD HIM AS HE
HAMBLED ON ABOUT HIS DEPARTED STEEL!
HIS CYCLOSTAL WAS SHAKEN AND LOOKED
EAGER!

IF THIS GUY'S GOT *SEN-
PANTS*...HE MUST BE
RIGHT! ...SO I COME HERE
EVERY SUNDAY!
THAT'S ALL I
CAN DO!



INMA SPOKE SO HER VOICE BOUNDED JUST
RIGHT...WITH THAT LITTLE CRACKING TONE!

I... I KNOW HOW
YOU... *FEEL*... MR...
HORROR! *HORROR!* *HORROR!* AND YOU ARE
...MRS. LEECHMAN! I SEE
AT YOUR HUSBAND'S TOMB-
STONE!



INMA DROPPED HER STYLISH FLATTERING
THEN A LITTLE FOR OFFENSE.

OH, MR. HORRORST! YOU'RE
SO SLEAZY, TO THINK OF
THAT! I WOULDN'T HAVE
NOT IN A BILLION YEARS!



FOR A BRIEF PERIOD, THE WIDOW AND THE
WIDOWER STOOD IN SILENCE BEFORE THEIR
RESPECTIVE SPOUSES' GRAVES! THEN INMA
GLANCED AT HER WATCH.

OH, BEAST! I MUST
HURRY! I'M LATE!
I PROMISED I'D
MEET A GIRL-FRIEND
FOR LUNCH!

MY CAR IS PARKED
OUTSIDE THE CEMETERY!
MRS. LEECHMAN!
WOULD I GIVE YOU
A LIFT?



WOULD YOU, MR. HORNBEY THAT WOULD BE SO RICH! BUT I WOULDN'T WANT TO TAKE YOU OUT OF YOUR WEY!

NOT AT ALL, MRS. LEBENHAUS! I'D BE HAPPY TO! IF YOU'RE FINISHED, I

MR. HORNBEY'S CAR WAS WAITING OUTSIDE THE CEMETERY GATE...JUST AS HE SAID! HENNA GASPED WHEN SHE SAW IT! IN THE OPEN FRONT SEAT, A CHAMPAGNE CAT SMILED! IT WAS ONE OF THOSE BIG TWELVE CYLINDER LIMOUSINES THAT ONLY THE VERY WEALTHY COULD AFFORD!

OH, MY! WHAT AN EXQUISITE AUTOMOBILE!

IT'S A BOLLIS-ROYCE...IMPORTED FROM DENMARK! I BOKE IT TO STEAL FOR OUR SECOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY!

LENA SAWE MR. HORNBEY THE SAME OF A RESTAURANT IN TOWN AND HE PASSEED IT ON TO THE CHAUFFEUR! THEY SPED INTO THE CITY IN SILENCE...HENNA REMAINS IN THE LUXURY OF THE CAR! WHEN THEY PULLED UP...

THANK YOU SO MUCH, MR. HORNBEY! THIS WAS VERY KIND OF YOU!

GOOD AFTERNOON, MRS. LEBENHAUS! I'LL BE HERE AGAIN TOMORROW!

NOT HERE! OH! FEAR OF COURSE!

GOOD! ALL RIGHT, ALEX! HOME PLAINS!

LENA WALKED ON TO HER APARTMENT FROM WHERE MR. HORNBEY COULD SHOPPEE HER! OF COURSE SHE HAD NO APPOINTMENT WITH A MAN! PERHAPS! THAT WAS JUST AN EXCUSE SHE USED! WHEN SHE ARRIVED, SHE SPEAKED ON A PHONE AND LIT A CIGARETTE! SHE LEFT THOUGHT OF THAT GREAT BIG EXPENSIVE CAR!

WE MUST BE LONELY!

LENA MADE UP HER MIND EIGHT THREE AND THERE THAT CORSET HORNBEY...AND HE DROVE...HERE FOR HER! SHE TEASED HER LUCKY STARS THAT SHE'S SUCCESSFULLY BOTTLED THE EIGHT HENNA TO VISIT HERMAN'S GRAVE YEAR DAY! SHE'S DONE THERE FOR APPEARANCE'S SAKE...SO PEOPLE WOULD THINK SHE WAS MOURNING FOR HIM...SO THEY WOULDN'T SUSPECT...

...SO THEY WON'T SUSPECT THE TRUTH THAT I MURDERED THE DEVIL...FOR HIS INSURANCE!

THE FOLLOWING MORNING HENNA WENT AGAIN TO THE CEMETERY! AS SHE STOOD BEFORE MR. LATE HERMAN'S GRAVE, WAITING FOR CORSET HORNBEY TO SHOW UP, SHE SMILED COME AT IT!

YOU NEVER WERE MUCH GOOD TO ME WHILE YOU WERE ALIVE HERMAN! MAYBE NOW THAT YOU'RE DEAD...YOU'LL BE SOME GOOD AFTER ALL! IF I CAN PROVE CORSET HORNBEY, I'LL BE SET FOR LIFE!





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AS IRMA WAITED FOR ROBERT HORRIBLE, HER THOUGHTS WENT BACK TO THOSE MICHAMBLE YEARS WHEN SHE WAS MARRIED TO HERMAN LITCHMAN.

LOOK AT THESE SLITS! ALL SHIPWRECK! AND I HAVEN'T BOUGHT A NEW DRESS IN MONTHS!

PLEASE IRMA! I'M WORKING AS HARD AS I CAN! LEAVE ME ALONE, MOM!

'LEAVE ME ALONE!' THAT'S ALL YOU CAN SAY? YEAH! I'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE... WHEN YOU'RE DEAD!

AND YOU COLLECT MY INSURANCE?

YOUR INSURANCE? WHAT INSURANCE?

I TOOK OUT A POLICY! I... I WANTED TO LEAVE YOU PROVIDED FOR IN CASE MY THUMB WOULD SNAP OFF TO ME!



THAT WAS ALL IRMA NEEDED! THE IDEA THAT HERMAN HAD TAKEN OUT A LIFE INSURANCE POLICY IN HER NAME HAD BURNED IN IRMA'S BRAIN UNTIL SHE'D FINALLY DECIDED...

I CAN'T STAND HIM ANY LONGER! I'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HIM! I'VE GOT TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT!



AND THEN THE OPPORTUNITY'D COME! SHE AND HERMAN HAD GONE FOR A WEEK-END TRIP TO THE SEASIDE! THEY'D STAYED IN A RUN-DOVE TOURIST HOME! ONE EVENING THEY'D GONE OUT WALKING ON THE LONELY SLIPPS... IN THE MOONLIGHT...

LOOK, IRMA! A DESERTED LIGHTHOUSE! LET'S TAKE A LOOK!

ALL RIGHT, HERMAN!



SHE'D FOLLOWED HERMAN INTO THE ABANDONED LIGHTHOUSE AND UP THE RUSTY WINDING SPIRAL STAIRCASE... UP, UP, UP... TO THE VERY TOP...

ONLY A LITTLE HIGHER, IRMA! TIRED?

NO, HERMAN! SO AHEAD! I'M NOT TIRED!



THEY'D COME OUT ONTO THE BALCONY! THE SEA'D GURGLED AND ROARED HUNDREDS OF FEET BELOW. AT THE BASE OF THE CLIFFS! HERMAN HAD GONE TO THE RAILING... TO ADMIRE THE VIEW. ALL SILVERY IN THE MOONLIGHT! IRMA'D MOVED FORWARD... LIKE A CAT... AND SNEEZED HARD.



THEY'D CALLED HERMAN'S DEATH AN ACCIDENT AND IRMA RECEIVED THE INSURANCE! NOW FOOTSTEPS BEHIND HER INTERRUPTED HER REVERIE! MR. HORNBEY APPROACHED HE SMILED AT IRMA...

GOOD AFTERNOON, MRS. LEEDMAN! YOU NOT HOME EARLY, I SEE?

YES, MR. HORNBEY! AND NOW ARE YOU TODAY?

HEE, HEH! YEP! IRMA HAD IT ALL PLANNED! AND IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR HER PLANS TO BEGIN WORKING OUT! A FEW MORE SUNDAYS AT THEIR RESPECTIVE LATE-SPOUSES' GRAVES... A COCKTAIL TOGETHER... DINNER... AND THEN, ONE SUNDAY...

WE'RE BOTH LONELY! PEOPLE, IRMA! THERE'S NO REASON WHY WE SHOULD BE ON BEING LONELY!

ROBERT! ARE YOU PROPOSING TO ME HERE?

WHY NOT? I'M SURE ETHEL WOULD UNDERSTAND! SHE WOULDN'T MIND! SHE'D WANT IT THAT WAY! WILL YOU MARRY ME, IRMA?

OH, YES, ROBERT! YES! I'LL MARRY YOU!

SO IRMA HOOKED ROBERT HORNBEY! RIGHT THERE IN FRONT OF HER HUSBAND'S AND HIS WIFE'S GRAVES THE PROPOSAL TOOK PLACE! AS THEY TRUGGED OFF... ARM IN ARM... THE BRISK DECEMBER WIND SWEEP BETWEEN ETHEL'S AND HERMAN'S GRAVESTONES... WHISTLING OVER THE BARE BOUNDBRAND YOU ARE I... IF WE'D BEEN THERE... WOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT THE WIND SOUNDED LIKE WHISPERING... AS IF THINGS DEEP IN THE COLD EARTH WERE WHISPERING TO EACH OTHER...

WHEN IRMA AND ROBERT HORNBEY RETURNED FROM THEIR HOMEWOOD, ROBERT TOOK HIS NEW WIFE TO HIS PALAZZO, COUNTRY ESTATE...

WELL, IRMA! THIS IS IT! NOW DO YOU LIKE HORNBEY?

OH, ROBERT! IT'S BEAUTIFUL! IT IS... GOOD GOD!

IRMA STARED WIDE-EYED AT THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE THAT ROSE FROM THE GLEAMING FLOOR AND WOUND UP TO A BALCONY HIGH OVERHEAD! SUDDENLY, IRMA'S HER BRAIN, A THROBBING BEAN... A SOUND LIKE BARS POUNDING A HEAVY BEAN ON A STEEL PLATE...

WHAT? WHAT IS IT? YOU'RE WHITE AS A SHEET!

IT, IT'S NOTHING, ROBERT. NOTHING!

THE FIRST THING THAT IENA DID AS MISTRESS OF HOEN-SEIAR, WAS TO HAVE THE ROOMS ON THE BALCONY SEALED UP! SHE EXPRESSED TO HER THE WINNING EPICAL STRATEGY.

BUT, IENA? I DON'T UNDER-
STAND.

I HATE
SPINAL STAIN-
CASES.
ROBERT...
THAT'S ALL!

AFTER THAT, SHE PRO-
CEEDED TO MAKE ROBERT'S
LIFE MISERABLE BY RASING
AND CRITICISING HIM.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN
YOU'RE GOING TO
VISIT ETHEL'S
GRAVE? YOU'RE
MARRIED TO
ME NOW! I
FORBID IT!

IENNA?
HOW
COULD
YOU?

IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE
IENNA'S CONSTANT REPRIMAND-
ING AND ABUSE OF ROBERT
CAUSED HIM TO ESCAPE HER-
SELF AND RUN-AWAY...ARE
FINALLY TO FALL SERIOUSLY
ILL.

A. PLEASE,
IENNA? C. CALL
DOCTOR
RABBIT FOR
ME!

DON'T BE A FOOL.
ROBERT! YOU'RE
NOT SICK! WAX-
EE TUNE STUPID
EX-WIFE MARRIED
TO... BUT NOT
ME! NOW GET
UP!

IENA LEFT IT UP! ROBERT GOT PROGRESS-
IVELY WORSE! ONE NIGHT, HER RESULTS
FORWARD ETHEL AND HER INDECENT TORSION-
LACHRYMOS EQUILIBRIUM ROBERT TO A MENTAL
BREAKING POINT! OUTSIDE, A FURIOUS THUNDER-
STORM RAGED! HE RUSHED FROM HIS BED.

ROBERT! COME
BACK! WHERE
ARE YOU GOING?

ETHEL!
ETHEL!

ROBERT DASHED OUT INTO THE BLINDING
STORM! HE TOOK A CAR AND SPED HARDLY
TO THE CEMETERY WHERE HIS FIRST WIFE
LAY BURIED. WHERE HE'S MET AND PROPOSED
TO IENNA! AS HE CAR CRASHED TO A STOP,
ROBERT PLUNGED HIMSELF THROUGH THE COIN-
TER-LOCKER THE GARGLETT GRAVE.

ETHEL! IM SORRY! I'M SORRY!

ROBERT SPLASHED THROUGH THE RAGING
EMULSION THAT CASCADED BETWEEN THE
DRAVENOURGE AND FINALLY REACHED ETHEL'S
GRAVE! HE HURLED HIMSELF FACE DOWNWARD
UPON IT, RUBBING THE SOAKED GROUND FOR-
GIVEN.

FORGIVE ME, ETHEL! FORGIVE
ME FOR WHAT I'VE DONE!

THE RAIN CONTINUED TO POUR FURIOUSLY ON
ROBERT'S PROSTRATE FORM! SUDDENLY, HE
WAITED AS A FATAL HEART ATTACK WEAKED
HIS BODY! THEN HE LAY QUITE STILL! THE
RAIN LET UP SLIGHTLY! THE WIND CAME UP!
THE WHISPERING SEEMED TO START AGAIN!
THEN, SLOWLY, THE ODDISH RUE OF THE GRAVE
SEEMED TO FALL ON ABOUT THE STILL FIGURE.

IN HORROR, IRMA FACED THE HUGE MARBLE Foyer NERVOUSLY! SHE SHIVERED AS SHE STARED UP AT THE CURVING SPIRAL STAIRCASE...

"I'VE GOT TO HAVE THAT MONSTROSITY TORN DOWN! IT BITES ME THE CREEPS... KEEPS REMINDING ME OF THE LIGHTHOUSE!"

SUDDENLY, IRMA HEARD FOOT- STEPS OUTSIDE THE HUGE OAR DOOR! THE BROS. RATTLED... SHE LEANED IT OPEN...

"IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU CAME BACK, ROBERT! YOU... OH, MY GOD!"

THE THING MOVED TOWARD IRMA! IT STARK FROM COSSING GRAVE MUD! CLOUDS OF RANCID DRINK... HOTTED FLESH FELL FROM ITS EYELESS FACE...

HERMAN? NO! NO!

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!



BEHIND THE MAN-THING CAME THE WOMAN- THING! ITS HAIR WAS Matted WITH THE GEMETERY CODE... ITS CHEEKS BURNED... ITS WHITENED TEETH GRINNING ILLUIONALLY... ITS SCENT DECOMPOSING FISSERS REACHING...

GOOD LORD! HELP ME!

IRMA RUSHED UP THE STAIRCASE! THE THING SLOPPED AFTER HER! SHE TRIPPED, BRUISING HER FACE, BUT GOT UP QUICKLY AND CONTINUED ON UP THE WINDING STEPS



YEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

IT WAS THEN, AS IRMA TRIED TO OPEN ONE OF THE BALCONY BEDROOM DOORS, THAT SHE REMEMBERED WITH HORRIFIED CLIMAX

OH, LORD! IT'S LOCKED! I HAD THEM REALED SHUT!

IN THE MORNING THEY FOUND THE TWO ROTTED BODIES ON THE BALCONY! BELOW, ON THE MARBLE FLOOR, WAS ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF IRMA...

UP A FACE LIKE TWO WAXLON! HAVE SOME PIES TO HER, SMASHED HER BODY IN PAGES!

AND WHEN DID THESE TWO OLD COMBES COME FROM?

HEEHEE! WHAT A RHEORICAL QUESTION, OH, ROBERT WHERE ELSE DO THEY COME FROM? WHERE DO ALL WALKING COMBES COME FROM? FROM THEIR GRAPES, OF COURSE! NO IRMA FINALLY HAD HER HAND-UP... ON A WINDING STAIRCASE! HEEHEE! WELL... AFTER ALL... SHE WASN'T EXPECTING HERMAN AND ETHEL TO COME A-POUNCE!





(continued from inside front cover)
a gothic novel (Mary Shelley, 1818, revised in 1832). Most of what we know, however, comes from non-print media. The novel itself tells a confusing tale of a young man who creates a larger-than-life humanoid that then destroys much of the creator's family before presumably destroying himself.

If you ask your local pretenseager he will tell you Frankenstein is the monster. It is not, of course, it is



the protagonist. Although this confusion was already in place by the turn of the century, it was compounded by the Universal motion picture and its sequels. If you ask how the audience feels about the "monster," you will probably learn a very important fact. You will learn that this creature, far more than the other horror monster, Dracula, is really sympathetic.

Frankenstein is, as George Levine has written in a collection of criticism appropriately entitled *The Evidence of "Frankenstein"* (1979), "one of the great texts of English literature."

Feminist critics have recently seen the novel as a "woman's book." Those who insist the impersonality of texts have countered that Frankenstein was published anonymously and the reviewers like Walter Scott were convinced it was not only written by a man, but that the man was Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Shelley's husband. Notwithstanding, the text itself is awkwardly written, with inconsistently plotted narrative and peopled with a host of seemingly superfluous cipher-characters. A young man, Robert Walton, writes to his sister a verbatim account of what a young scientist, Victor Frankenstein, has accomplished in creating a "monster," who, in turn, has given young Frankenstein a verbatim account of what has happened to him during four years of the eighteenth century in Europe.

Students of absurdities have a field day wondering how Victor could create a being eight feet tall from the body parts of ordinary men, how this creature could become fluent in English and French in less than a year; and exactly how the monster finds Victor's journal of a regular-sized clerk that just happens to fit someone of his prodigious size. In the story, coincidence is taken into the levels of dream life where, after all, Mary Shelley says the story was first enacted.

Hidden under the ludicrous coincidences, however, is a subtlety of compelling interest that has nothing coincidental about it at all. A young man creates a being larger than life, then spurns his creation, making it monstrous, and "It" turns on him and his family. "Remember that I am thy creature," says the monster. "I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel, whom thou drivest from joy for no misdeed." The novel is about the birthing of a creature who enacts a systematic ravaging of the Frankenstein family by the calculated destruction of certain people. But why should the story have held our impassioned interest for so many generations? For a horror story to endure, it must not only be adaptable into different media, it must also be appealing to either sex, especially during



adolescence. The young audience, the primary audience of horror art, is uninterested in specific sexual roles.

(Witchell, Alumni Professor of English at the University of Florida, goes on from this point in his book to interpret the saga from both the male and the female point of view. It is recommended that readers who have not encountered Frankenstein in school go to their library, check out a copy and read it, not for the fast thrills of modern novels, but for the appreciation of glimpsing the roots of an enduring legend.)

—(The Publishers)

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THE VAULT OF HORROR

FEATURING...

GOOD LORD! THE BLOOD
HAS ALREADY BEEN DRAINED
OUT OF THIS CORPSE!
BUT HOW... WHO...?



THE BLOOD-DRINKER



THE BLOOD-DRINKER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, HEN? WON'T YOU COME INTO MY PARLOR? *UNDERTAKING* PARLOR, THAT IS! SET YOURSELF DOWN IN A COMFY COFFIN AND REST YOUR WEARY BONES, WHILE I BEAT MY RECORDS ABOUT ANOTHER *BLOOD-BOAST-LATOR* FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION HERE IN THE *VAULT OF HORROR*! AS YOU KNOW, I AM THE *WRECK-REPAIR*, AND THE STORY I AM GOING TO TELL IS *GRUESOME* ENOUGH TO *ROCK SIBRIALTIA*! WELL, HEN? SO LET'S BEGIN THE *TERRIFYING* TALE I CALL...

A BLOODY UNDERTAKING!



LIKE A HIRE MONSTER, THE TRAIN PANTED AND PUFFED FORTH ANGRY CLOUDS OF SMOKE AS IT SHOOK OUT OF TOMPkins STATION AND SLOWLY MOVED DOWN THE SILVERY THREADS OF TRACK INTO THE NIGHT. THE MAN ON THE PLATFORM WAVED A FINAL FAREWELL, TURNED, AND WALKED TOWARD HIS PARKED CAR...

(SIGH!) IT'S TOO BAD GEORGE DECIDED TO LEAVE! HE WAS THE BEST ASSISTANT I'VE EVER HAD! OH, WELL... (SIGH!)



HE SLID BEHIND THE WHEEL, CLOSED THE CAR DOOR, AND SWITCHED ON THE IGNITION. HE LIT A CIGARETTE AND, AS HE TOSSED THE BURNT MATCH OUT THE WINDOW, NOTICED A SLIGHT MOVEMENT IN THE SHADOWS OF THE STATION.



THE GIRL YARNED OPEN THE DOOR, WITH A HUSTLE OF HER SKIRT AND A FLASH OF STOCKINGED LEGS. SHE SETTLED HERSELF IN THE SEAT, A BIT FLUSTERED. THE MAN THREW IN THE CLUTCH, AND THEY DROVE AWAY.



AS THEY DROVE, GILBERT FOUND HIMSELF DOING A GREAT DEAL OF TALKING - A *BIG DEAL*.

YES, I OWN THE BIGGEST *ORIENTAL* PARLOR IN THE COUNTY! VERY SUCCESSFUL, IF I *DO* SAY SO MYSELF!



WELL... I'VE BEEN THINKING OF *REFUSING*, BUT I *CAN'T*! MY ASSISTANT JUST LEFT FOR THE CITY TO OPEN HIS *OWN* PLACE! NOW I HAVE TO TRAIN SOMEONE ELSE... AND A *GOOD* ASSISTANT ISN'T EASY TO FIND!



CURIOUS, HE WATCHED AS THE FIGURE OF A YOUNG WOMAN STEPPED INTO THE MOORLIGHT... AND WALKED SLOWLY YET DELIBERATELY ACROSS THE SNOW TO STAND BY HIS CAR WINDOW...

ER, GOOD EVENING! I... I DON'T SEE YOU GET OFF THE TRAIN CAR I... I MEAN, IF YOU DON'T MIND, COULD I GIVE YOU A LIFT?



THE GIRL SAT CLOSE TO HIM, HER LEGS CROSSED, A SOFT SMILE UPON HER LIPS. HER CHEAR, HEAVY PERFUME FILLED THE CAR. SHE SPOKE SOFTLY...

THE NAME IS WILMA! I'M *MADE* GLAD YOU WERE AROUND!



OH, I'LL GET ALONG! I'LL HAVE TO *WORK* HARDER, BUT I'M USED TO IT! WHEN I WAS A BOY...



GILBERT BLANCED OUT THE WINDOW AT THE DARK, DREARY HOUSE ALMOST COMPLETELY HIDDEN BY OVERHANGING LEAVES. THEN HE FELT WILMA'S BODY PRESS CLOSER TO HIM, AND HE TURNED TO FIND HER LIPS ONLY INCHES FROM HIS OWN!

THEN SUDDENLY, SHE WAS GONE...AND HE WAS LEFT WITH THE VISION OF HER SHAPELY LEGS...THE THRILL OF HER WARM, ROUST LIPS...THE SCENT OF HER PERFUME THAT STILL FILLED THE CAR...

HERE, GILBERT...THIS
DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE
SHAMEFUL I AM...



HEH, HEH! WHAT A **SCHLIMM!** GILBERT HAD IT **BAD**, AND EVERY NIGHT HE DIDN'T HAVE A 'CLIENT', HE WENT TO SEE WILMA! THE FACT THAT **PERHAPS** SHE WAS ONLY INTERESTED IN HIM BECAUSE OF HIS **MONEY** NEVER OAWRED ON HIM! HE WAS HEAD OVER HEELS IN **LOVE!**



WILMA...I...I'VE ONLY KNOWN YOU FOR A FEW DAYS, BUT I'VE GROWN TO...I MEAN, WILMA...WILL YOU BE MY **WIFE?**

SURE, MONEY... IF YOU WANT ME TO!



AND SO, THAT NIGHT, THEY DROVE TO THE NEXT TOWN AND WERE MARRIED...

I...I **WISH** WE COULD GO ON A HONEY-MOON NOW, WILMA...BUT I HAVE SO MUCH **WORK!**

I UNDER- STAND, GILBERT! IT'S ALL RIGHT! YOUR WORK IS MORE IMPORTANT!



GILBERT'S **FUNERAL HOME** WAS **VERY** BUSY! HE HAD NOT YET FOUND AN ASSISTANT, AND HAD TO DO ALL THE WORK HIMSELF! WHEN HE ARRIVED HOME AT NIGHT, WILMA WAS THERE TO COMFORT HIM...

I SEE SO LITTLE OF YOU! I LEAVE SO EARLY IN THE MORNING...BUT HOME SO LATE!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, GILBERT! YOU'LL FIND AN ASSISTANT SOON!



AND HE **DID!**... THE VERY NEXT DAY, A STRANGE QUER-LOOKING MAN APPLIED FOR THE JOB...

I'VE JUST ARRIVED IN TOWN, SIR, AND I **NEED** THE JOB... **BABY!** I'M NOT AFRAID TO WORK HARD, AND I LEARN FAST!

HAH...ALL RIGHT, MR. GRAYNE... YOU'RE **HIRRED!**



YOU CAN BEGIN IMMEDIATELY! I HAVE TO VISIT A 'CLIENT'... AND I WANT YOU TO WATCH THE LABORATORY WHILE I'M GONE!



YES, SIR!

HERE'S THE CORPSE I'M WORKING ON NOW! AS YOU CAN SEE, I'M REMOVING THE BLOOD WHILE INJECTING THE PRESERVING FLUID! I'LL SHOW YOU HOW ALL THIS IS DONE SOME OTHER TIME... PERHAPS TOMORROW!



YES, SIR!

GILBERT WASN'T GONE VERY LONG! BUT WHEN HE RETURNED, HE SAW ASSISTANT CHARLIE GRAYE... WASN'T IN THE LABORATORY...



HOW... PROBABLY STEPPED OUT FOR A MINUTE? AH! I SEE HE'S FINISHED REMOVING THE BLOOD!

HE STROLLED OVER NEAR THE TABLE ON WHICH THE CORPSE LAY, AND WENT TO LIFT A LARGE GLASS CONTAINER FROM THE FLOOR...



EMPTY? CHARLIE MUST HAVE DISPOSED OF THE BLOOD? HMM... MIGHT BE A BETTER ASSISTANT THAN I THOUGHT!

ABOUT A WEEK LATER, GILBERT ENTERED HIS PLACE OF BUSINESS AND SAT AT HIS DESK TO READ THE MORNING PAPER. ITS HEADLINE SCREAMED AT HIM!



GOOD HEAVENS! A VAMPIRE KILLING! I DIDN'T KNOW THERE WERE SUCH THINGS!

IT SAYS HERE THAT THE KILLING HAPPENED A WEEK AGO! THE BODY WASN'T FOUND UNTIL LAST EVENING! BURN! GIVES ME THE WILLIES! WELL... BETTER GET TO WORK!



HE TOSSED THE PAPER ASIDE AND WENT INTO HIS LABORATORY. THE LATEST CORPSE LAY ON ITS WHITE SLAB... AND GILBERT WITHDREW THE SHEET...



WHY... THIS CORPSE HAS ALREADY BEEN DRAINED OF ITS BLOOD! CHARLIE MUST HAVE WORKED ON IT LAST NIGHT!

HE'S A STRANGE LOOKING FELLOW... BUT HE'S COMING ALONG FINE!

A WEEK PASSED, AND GILBERT DIDN'T RECEIVE ANY NEW CALLS...



OH, WELL! THERE'S STILL A LOT OF OTHER THINGS TO BE DONE! PAPER WORK HAS PILED UP TREMENDOUSLY! NOW I'LL BE ABLE TO GET EVERYTHING STRAIGHTENED OUT!



GILBERT HAD MANY THINGS TO DO... BUT NOT SO WITH CHARLIE...



STILL THE DAYS PASSED AND NO NEW 'CLIENTS'. CHARLIE BECAME INCREASINGLY NERVOUS...



I I WISH *SOMEONE* WOULD OIE! ANYBODY! JUST... JUST SO'S I COULD HAVE SOMETHING TO DO! I'M GOIN' CRAZY!

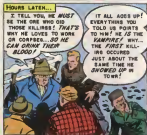
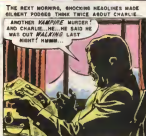


THAT EVENING, AT HOME WITH HIS WIFE WILMA...



OH, I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING *REALLY* WRONG WITH HIM! JUST A BIT... OOH, PERHAPS!





LIKE A SWARM OF ANGRY LOBSTERS DESTROYING EVERYTHING IN THEIR PATH, THE CROWD CRASHED THROUGH THE LABORATORY DOORS...



THE LITTLE MAN RAN AS FAST AS HIS LEGS COULD CARRY HIM, CRASHING INTO TREES, TRIPPING AND FALLING OVER ROCKS AND CRANKED BUSHES. HE TRIED DESPERATELY TO ESCAPE THE HYSTERICAL TOWNSFOLK WHO CONSTANTLY NARROWED THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM AND HIMSELF...



HE FELL TO THE GROUND, WEAR, TRENZLINE... AND SCRAMBLED AND CLAWED AT THE SNOW CONVULSIVELY IN A FRANTIC EFFORT TO FLEE, WHILE TEARS STREAMED DOWN HIS PINCHED, SWEAT-COVERED FACE! BUT IT WAS TOO LATE. THEY WERE UPON HIM!



TERRIBLY FRIGHTENED, CHARLIE DARTED THROUGH A WINDOW AND INTO THE TREES... WHILE THE MOB, FURIOUSLY INCENSED, ROARED INARREST AND GAVE CHASE...



FEAR CONSTRICTED HIS BREATHING... HIS POUNDING HEART SEEMED TO TEAR ITSELF FROM HIS BRACE AND HE SCREAMED AT THE TOP OF HIS LUNGS FOR SALVATION! HE SCREAMED... BUT HIS EARS WERE FILLED WITH A THUNDEROUS SOUND THAT HE KNEW WOULD ONLY BE STILLED BY HIS DEATH!



HE FELT HIMSELF LIFTED AND THROWN, BEATEN, KICKED, LIFTED AND CRUSHED TO THE GROUND AGAIN AND AGAIN! HE FELT NO ACTUAL PAIN AND TIME WAS AN UNKNOWN THING! HE KNEW ONLY AN ALL CONSUMING FEAR... HE HEARD ONLY A TREMENDOUS CONGLOMERATION OF HIGH PITCHED, FRENZIED SCREAMS! HE FELT THE SHARP POINT OF THE STAKE JABBING INTO HIS CHEST! HE SAW THE SLEDGE HAMMER RAISED...



IT WAS OVER... AND THE ENSUING SILENCE WAS MORE DEAFENING THAN THEIR LOUDEST SHOOTING. SOME BEGAN TO WALK SLOWLY BACK TOWARD THE TOWN...



THERE WAS NO JOY, NO TALKING, ONLY AN EMPTY, YET GLORIOUS REALIZATION THAT A HORRIBLE DANGER TO THEM HAD AT LAST BEEN DESTROYED...



GILBERT POKES TRUCKED BACK INTO TOWN WITH THE OTHERS! THOUGH TIRED AND WORN FROM THE CHASE, HE NONETHELESS FELT LIKE A HERO... FOR HADN'T HE BEEN THE ONE WHO HAD WIELDED THE SLEDGE HAMMER?



HIS ENTIRE BODY ACHED AND PAINED HIM, AND HIS WEARINESS WAS ALMOST OVERWHELMING. AS HE ENTERED HIS UNDERTAKING PARLOR...



OH, LORD! I HOPE I NEVER HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN! I'M SURE HE DID RIGHT... YET IT WAS SO HORRIBLE TO SEE!

IN A SEMI-TRANCE, HE MOVED THROUGH THE ROOMS TO THE REAR OF THE BUILDING, AND PUSHED OPEN THE LABORATORY DOOR...



ER...THERE'S WILMA! FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN HER IN THE LABORATORY! WHY IS SHE BEING OVER THAT BODY?

PUZZLED, HE MOVED SLOWLY AROUND UNTIL HE WAS IN FRONT OF HER. THEN SHE FLASHED UP AT HIM AND SMILED! HE GASPED IN HORROR AS HE SAW HER PÁLSED, BLOOD-COVERED MOUTH...THE TWO SMALL HOLES IN HER VICTIM'S NECK...



WILMA! YOU'RE THE VAMPIRE!!
AAAAGH!!

-THE END-

YEH, HEH! CHARMING! SIMPLY CHARMING! WELL... AT LEAST GILBERT CAN BE SURE THAT WILMA DON'T WARY HIM FOR HIS MONEY...SHE REALLY HAD HIS DARRER AT HEART! SHE DIDN'T WANT TO DRINK HIS



POCKETS...ONLY HIS CUSTOMERS! AND WASN'T IT A BLOODY SHAME ABOUT POOR INNOCENT CHARLIE! THEY STAKED HIM TO A FREE BIDE TO THE TOWN GEMETERYON. IF YOU SMELL A FOUL DOOR ABOUT THIS TIME, IT'S ONLY THE BREE THE OLD WITCH IS PREPARING FOR YOUR PLEASURE! SHE FOLLOWS NEXT, SO BYE FOR A WHILE!

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEY, NEXT I GOT A BOWL COOKED UP! SMELL IT? COME IN! COME INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR! I'M YOUR WAITRESS IN WAILS, THE OLD WITCH! EACH TIME WE MEET, I LIGHT THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON AND BREW A FASTY TALE OF SAVORY SCREAMINGS, ENRICHED WITH GORE, TOPPED OFF WITH A DASH OF DELIRIUM, AND SERVED UP TO YOU AS A MEALING HORROR HELPING! THIS LITTLE TARN I'M ABOUT TO OPEN OUT OUGHT TO SO PRETTY FUR! IT'S CALLED...

...WITH ALL THE TRAPPINGS!



A GENTLE BREEZE FANDED THE PINE TREES THAT TOWERED ABOVE THE TOWN'S ONLY CEMETERY. THE SMALL BAND OF FUR-TRAPPERS AND THEIR WIVES STOOD IN SILENCE AS THE SIMPLE PINE BOX WAS LOWERED INTO THE SLEAVING GRAVE. THE MOURNERS HAD COME DOWN FROM THEIR CABINS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE CANADIAN NORTH WOODS TO PAY THEIR LAST RESPECTS TO A FELLOW-TRAPPER.

SMILE WAS A GOOD MAN!
WE'LL MISS HIM ON THE TRAP LINES.
COME, MAMA! IT IS OVER!



AN AGED COUPLE TURNED FROM THE BAD SCENE AND MADE THEIR WAY OUT OF THE CEMETERY.

PIERRE! WHAT IS IT? YOU ARE SO PALE!
IT IS NOTHING, MARIA! NOTHING!



PIERRE OVAL AND HIS WIFE, MARIA, THROBLED WEARILY OUT OF TOWN AND INTO THE WOODS ALONG A WELL-WORN TRAIL...

IT MUST BE SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU SHOW SO WHITE, PIERRE!

I WOULD HATHEN NOT SPEAK ABOUT IT, MARIA!



THE OLD PEOPLE CONTINUED ON IN SILENCE! THE PATH THEY TRAVELED BECAME MORE AND MORE OVERGROWN WITH EACH POND! FINALLY, THEY CAME TO A CLEARING...

AH, IT IS GOOD TO BE HOME!

I WILL MAKE YOU SOME TEA, PIERRE! PERHAPS YOU WILL FEEL BETTER!



PIERRE AND HIS WIFE ENTERED THE SPARSELY FURNISHED TRAPPER'S CABIN

MARIA! I CANNOT STAND TO THINK OF EITHER OF US DYING AND BEING BURIED IN THE GROUND PREY TO WORMS AND CRAWLING THINGS!



AH! SO THAT IS WHAT IS TROUBLING YOU, PIERRE!



PIERRE CAME DOWN AT THE LARGE TABLE AT ONE END OF THE NOON

EMILE! THEY PUT HIM INTO A PINE BOX! SOON IT WILL ROT! SOON THE WABOOTS WILL GET AT HIS REMAINS...

A PINE BOX IS ALL THAT EMILE'S FAMILY COULD AFFORD, PIERRE!



NO! I WILL NOT BE BURIED LIKE THAT! NEVER!



NOW NOW AND DRINK YOUR TEA! STOP TALKING THAT WAY!

SO PIERRE RUSHED AND DRANK HIS TEA! HE STOPPED TALKING ABOUT IT. BUT HE DIDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT! THE HORRENDOUS THOUGHT OF BURNING MARIA, OR BEING BURNED HIMSELF... IN A PINE BOX, TO BECOME A VICTIM OF THE WORMS AND NATS PREYED UPON HIS MIND! WHEN WINTER CAME

IT IS TIME TO SET UP THE TRAP-LINES, PIERRE! I MAKE THEM SHORT THIS YEAR! YOU ARE OLD!

OLD AND NEAR DEATH, MARIA! I WILL MAKE THEM LONGER THIS YEAR! I MUST HAVE MONEY!



SOON THE DROVE BEGAN TO FALL AND THE TEMPERATURE DROPPED TO FREEZING! PIERRE TOOK OUT HIS TRAPS, IGNORING THE PAINS OF ARTHRA THAT WHACKED HIS BODY! HE HAD SOME A WEEK LAYING THE TRAP-LINE.



PIERRE! YOU ARE MAD! IT WILL TAKE YOU THREE DAYS AND TWO NIGHTS TO COVER THE TRAP-LINE! IT IS TOO MUCH FOR YOU!

I MUST DO IT, MARIA! I MUST!



THIS ENVELOPE CAME WHILE YOU WERE AWAY! JULES BROUGHT IT OUT FROM THE SETTLEMENT!

AH! WHAT I WAS WAITING FOR!

PIERRE TOOK OPEN THE ENVELOPE AND BEGAN TO READ THE ENCLOSED FOLDER! MARIA FEELING OVER HIS SHOULDER AND GASPED.

METAL VAULTS? WHAT IS THAT, PIERRE?

SEE! IT SAYS SO. RIGHT HERE! SEE! 'ABSOLUTE PROTECTION'

PROTECTION FROM WHAT? THE MARGOTS! THE WORMS! A METAL VAULT IS THE ANSWER! THE COFFIN GOES INSIDE! EVERY THING IS SEALED!

PIERRE! STOP IT! YOU ARE CRAZY TO THINK OF SUCH THINGS! 'HEMMING! TOO BAD! THE PRICES ARE NOT EVEN!'



EVERY MORNING, PIERRE WOULD GET OFF ON THE THREE DAY TRIP TO COVER HIS TRAP-LINE AND BATHEN THE ANIMALS THAT HAD BEEN CAUGHT! LATE IN DECEMBER, WHEN HE WAS RETURNING FROM ONE OF THESE TRIPS.



MARIA! MARIA! WHAT IS IT?

MARIA LAY SPRAWLED ON THE CABIN FLOOR! SHE WAS DEAD! PIERRE FELL ON HIS KNEES AND WEPT.



MARIA! MARIA! MARIA!

AFTER A WHILE, PIERRE STOOD UP AND DROD HIS EYES! HE LOOKED DOWN AT HIS DECEASED WIFE. HIS FACE DETERMINED.

DO NOT WORRY, MARIA! I WILL NOT LET THEM PUT YOU IN A **FLAMEY FINE BOX!** I WILL NOT LET THEM FEED YOU TO THE **GRAY CRAWLERS!**



PIERRE THROD DOWN THE SNOW-COVERED TRAIL TO THE NORTH WOODS SETTLEMENT! BY THE TIME HE'D ENTERED THE TOWN, PIERRE HAD DECIDED ON A COURSE OF ACTION.

I MUST BE CAREFUL! PERHAPS THE METAL VAULT IS EXPENSIVE IF I CANNOT AFFORD IT, THEY WILL FORCE ME TO BURY MARIA IN A **FINE BOX!**



SO WHEN PIERRE ENTERED THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN UNDER-TAKER.

PIERRE: PIERRE DUVAL! EX. DO NOT TELL ME THERE IS **BAD NEWS**, MON AMI!



NO, MERR! IT IS NOT THAT! I JUST WANT A LITTLE INFORMATION!

PIERRE BENT AND LIFTED HIS DEAD WIFE'S BODY! HE CARRIED IT TO THE IRON BED THAT STOOD AT ONE END OF THE CABIN, AND LAID HER DOWN GENTLY.

I'LL BE BACK SOON, MERR! I AM TOWN INTO THE SETTLEMENT TO INQUIRE ABOUT METAL VAULTS!



YOU SEE, MARIA AND I WERE THINKING! WE ARE SETTING ON IN YEARS NOW! WE FEEL THAT WE OUGHT TO BEGIN PREPARING FOR, WELL, YOU UNDERSTAND! WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT METAL VAULTS AND WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THEM!

FORGET ABOUT A METAL VAULT, PIERRE!



ONE OF THOSE THINGS COSTS **THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS!**



THREE HUNDRED! MON DIEU!



PIERRE RETURNED TO HIS CABIN AND LAY INTO A CHAIN BESIDE HIS DEAD WIFE'S BODY.

THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS! WHY... IT WOULD TAKE A WHOLE WINTER'S TRAPPING TO MAKE THAT MUCH MONEY!



SUDDENLY PIERRE JUMPED UP HE RUSHED TO THE WINDOW AND STARED OUT AT THE ICEBLOES HANGING FROM THE ROOF.

OF COURSE! OF COURSE!
HOW SIMPLE! HOW EASY!

PIERRE TURNED TO HIS DEAD

MARIA... YOU WILL HAVE YOUR METAL PAULD, MARIA! I WILL WAIT TILL I HAVE TRAPPED THREE-HUNDRED DOLLARS WORTH OF FELTS... AND THEN I WILL BURY YOU!

PIERRE CARRIED MARIA OUT INTO THE FREEZING WIND AND AROUND TO THE BACK OF THE CABIN! A SNOW LADDER SHACK, USED IN THE SUMMER AS AN ICE-HOUSE, STOOD BEFORE HIM...

IN THE MEANTIME... YOU WILL SLEEP IN HERE!

FROM THE FROZEN STREAM BEYOND THE CLEANNING, PIERRE CUT SLICES OF ICE AND GRASSED THEM TO THE SHED... WHERE MARIA, COVERED WITH A THREAD-BARE GUILT, LAY ON A WOOL MATRESS.

THE ICE WILL FREEZE YOU.
MY DEAR! YOU WILL STOP PRESERVED UNTIL YOUR FUNERAL!

THEN PIERRE LOCKED THE SHED DOOR AND FILED SNOW HIGH AROUND TO SEAL IT.

JUST LIKE THE FROZEN-FOOD LOCKERS I HAVE HEARD ABOUT!

IN THE MONTH THAT FOLLOWED, PIERRE LENGTHENED HIS TRAP-LINE SO THAT IT TOOK HIM ALMOST A WEEK TO COVER IT! EACH MONDAY HE WOULD SET OUT, AND BY SATURDAY WOULD RETURN LADEN WITH THE FUR-BEARING ANIMALS THAT HAD BEEN ENTRAPPED.

GASP... THIS WEEK WAS GOOD!
TWO OTTERS... ONE SILVER FOX... ONE MUSKRAT... AND TWO LYNX!
TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS, AT LEAST!

PIERRE WORKED HIS TRAP-LINE FEVERISHLY THROUGHOUT THE LONG WINTER! EACH TIME HE RETURNED TO HIS CABIN WITH FELTS, HE WOULD STOP BY THE SHED.

IT WILL NOT BE LONG NOW, MARIA!
SOON I WILL HAVE ENOUGH!

ONCE, ON ONE OF HIS TRAP-LINE BOUNDS, PIERRE CAME ACROSS A TRAP THAT HAD BEEN SPRUNG! THE SNOW AROUND THE TRAP WAS STAINED RED WITH BLOOD BUT THE ANIMAL WAS NOT THERE! ONLY A FROZEN PAW WAS PINNED BETWEEN THE TRAP JAWS...

"EAGLE BREW! A LEAF! AND A BIG ONE, TOO! IT HAD RIPPED ITSELF LOOSE! ITS RIGHT FOREPAW STILL LAYS IN MY TRAP!"



PIERRE FOLLOWED THE TRAIL OF BLOOD THROUGH THE SNOW, BUT LOST IT NEAR THE CLEARING...

"AH! IT CANNOT HUNT FOOD WITH BUT THREE LEGS! I WILL PROBABLY FIND IT DEAD WHEN THE THAW COMES!"



ON THROUGH THE WINTER PIERRE CORRECTLY TRAVELLED THE TRAP-LINES, BATHING HIS SATCHES! THE COLLECTION OF BELTS GREW... ONLY A FEW MORE.

"HARR! THER I WILL HAVE ENOUGH!"

PAIN TORTURED PIERRE'S Aching BACK, BUT THE DETERMINED TRAPPER IGNORED IT! THE THOUGHT OF THE SPRING THAW AND MAMIE'S FUNERAL SPURRED HIM ON...

"EAGLE! WHAT LUCK!"



AND THEN, IN FEBRUARY...

"I HAVE IT! I HAVE THE THREE-HUNDRED DOLLARS WORTH OF FELTS!"



PIERRE PACKED HIS COLLECTION OF FURS AND RUSHED INTO THE SETTLEMENT TO SELL THEM.

"GREAT, GUYAL! HERE'S YOUR MONEY! THREE-HUNDRED AND FOUR DOLLARS!"

"THANK YOU! THANK YOU!"



WAVING HIS MONEY, PIERRE RUSHED INTO THE SETTLEMENT'S UNDERTAKING ESTABLISHMENT...

"HERE! HERE IT IS! THE THREE-HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR THE METAL VAULT!"

"WHAT METAL VAULT? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT PIERRE?"





FOR MY WIFE! THE METAL VAULT FOR MY WIFE! NO FLIMSY PINE BOX FOR HER!

MARIA? SHE IS DEAD?



YES! SHE DIED IN DECEMBER!

MON DIEU, OUI! YOU HAVE KEPT HER SINCE THEN?



YES! SHE IS FROZEN IN THE ICE-HOUSE! I WANTED TO BURY HER IN A METAL VAULT SO SHE WOULD SLEEP IN PLACE. UNDIS-TURBED! YOU WILL ORDER IT NOW?

OF...OF COURSE, PIERRE! OF COURSE!

PIERRE HURRIED BACK TO HIS CABIN THROUGH THE icy winds! HE WANTED TO TELL MARIA THE GOOD NEWS...

MARIA! MARIA! I HAVE DONE IT! I HAVE ORDERED YOUR FUNERAL!



AS PIERRE UNLOCKED THE ICE-HOUSE, TEARS OF JOY FILLED HIS AGING EYES! HE SWUNG OPEN THE DOOR, SMILING HAPPILY! SUDDENLY THE SMILE FROZE ON HIS WIDENED FACE! HIS EYES WIDENED IN A HORROR...



MARIA! OH... MON DIEU!

MARIA'S BODY HAD BEEN DRAGGED FROM ITS MATTRESS BIER AND LAY NEED IN A DARK CORNER OF THE SUB-ZERO ICE HOUSE! MOST OF ITS FLESH HAD BEEN STRIPPED AWAY LEAVING WHITE BONES BESIDE IT, A VIOLENT LOOKING GRAY FORM CROUCHED... FANGS BARED A LYNX WITH ITS RIGHT PAWED TORN OFF.



YAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!



HEE, HEE! LIKE THEY SAY ROOMS! A CHAIR OF EVENTS IS ONLY AS STRONG AS ITS WEAKEST LINK! SO POOR PIERRE'S PLAN WAS FORT TO SHRED! THE BLEEDING WILD-CAT JUST CRAWLED INTO THE ICE HOUSE... POUNDED ITSELF A FINE MEAL, TICKET! AND MANGLED AROUND! NOT THAT'S BLAME IT! AFTER ALL, A HOT MEAL IS FINE, BUT COLD CUTS ARE BETTER THAN NOTHING! OF COURSE, PIERRE SOLIDIFIED THE LAME OLD FELINE! HEE, HEE! HE FEED-OFF ON THE LYNX! BYE, NOW!



THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Seppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear VK,

I just love my EC. I only have #11 of THE VAULT OF HORROR, but I sure intend to get more! I loved all the stories, but I thought "Fountains of Youth" was the best. Of course, I will convince my friends to buy ECs because your comics are the best I've ever seen in my life (I'm 11 years old). Keep up the great work, both you and Russ. Truly a fan.

Jon Rose Indianapolis, IN

If you live in TIT, same result! You can get our back issues from us direct (see end of letters column).

—VK

I have questions: 1) Is there a video game of "Take from the Crypt"? 2) Which monster is the strongest? 3) What happens to a werewolf if you grind it up or burn it to ashes, does it die? (People say only silver can kill werewolves.)

Someone Somewhere, NJ

1) Sure; don't ask. 2) The Living Lumberjack. 3) Check "Wish You Were Here" (HAUNT 22, in GLAD VAULT #3). Hah-hah!

—VK

Dear VK,

I really loved your issue 12. My favorite story was "A Stitch in Time!" I guess Mr. Leach got all tied up in the end. How are you doing in The Vault of Horror? You're the coolest ghoul around! Well, I'd better go or my maunty will suck my blood! Horrifically yours,

Cody Alexander, age 11 Lancasterburg, KY

Dear VK,

You are the greatest! I have collected your comics since VAULT #10. It was great! I especially loved "One Last Ring!" I have just one question: Are you and OW going to be on the "Crypt" show? The fourth Ghoul, unatic.

Derek McLean Houston, TX

Maybe not, but simplified versions of us are on the Saturday Night.

—VK

I recently became a fan of you and the OW and CK before I left for India where I'm writing you from

India has many ghoums, ghostly rumors. There's a haunted house in my neighborhood. Have you done any of your haunting in India?

In the story "Monster in the Loft" the OW said she teaches a cooking class. What kinds of foods does she cook? May I come to a class? If not, I beg her to send me a recipe.

My father read the story "What the Dog Dragged In" as a kid. I write horror stories. I'll send you some. (I'll be back when the letter reaches you.)

Even Harry, age 9 La Mesa, CA

Did you visit the capital, in India-napolis?
[VK, yhe provincial peophead, that's INdia—the subcontinent]

—ED

Oh, you mean IN Indianapolis, not speaking of which. The Old Witch sent me a dish spiced with curry—Tom Curry!

—VK

Dear Vault Keeper,

Is it me or does "What the Dog Dragged In" in issue #11 bear a lot of resemblance to a story written by Ray Bradbury? It's me, isn't it?

After reading "Gone...Fishing" (also in issue #11) I'd think twice about eating a chocolate bar that is lying around on the beach!

While reading one of my last copies of "Masters of Terror" I noticed that "The Music of Birch Zarn" by H.P. Lovecraft was illustrated by an artist named Johnny Craig. I couldn't help but wonder if it was the one and only Johnny Craig of EC. Is it?

If you print this letter, please print my address. I would like to hear from fellow EC fans.

Eloise Radtke 3225 E. Bonafide #208
Gilbert, AZ 85234

Well, maybe Al Feldstein sat on a copy of "Dark Carnival" somewhere along the line. Mathilda if Johnny Craig did the lines on a Lovecraft story we could figure it out by looking. Can you send a photocopy (or can another reader confirm or deny)?

—VK

Dear VaultKeeper,

I'm your #1 fan. I like all 3 of you, even The Old Witch. You and The Crypt-Keeper are my favorites. I wish you had a show of your own. If I were the creator I would call it TALES FROM THE VAULT OF HORROR. In VAULT #9 "Grandma's Ghost" was cool! And I liked "One Last Ring!" I like all of your stories so far.

James Franco Agawam, MA

Dear VK,

I loved VAULT #10. I have never been a big fan of VAULT, but after this issue I think I'll reconsider. The best story was "What the Dog Dragged In". I also liked OW's story. It was a great sequel to "Frankenstein."

I have a suggestion: take out CK's "Page of Fine Arts" and put mine "The VK's Corner" longer. I like the letter column better, and think it should be longer.

CK & P & A doesn't appear in CRYPT. Why does it appear here? Keep up the good work.

John Brown Harrison, TN

It's a simple matter of mathematics: The Script-Reader, as, Crypt-Keeper gets a TV-inflected number of letters and needs the three pages of space to keep the little horror-heads satisfied. THEN he pulls rank and uses my and Whitley's third page for his own overbearing self-promotion. But I've fooled him; now I'm getting three pages of letters! —VK

Dear VK,

Please please please please please will you print a story about your origin? OK did and I bet you ten bucks that yours is much more fascinating.

Here's a question I have: how come there's no blood in your stories?

Oh yeah--recently in one of the comic book stores in my quaint suburban little town, I purchased a HAUNT OF FEAR from the 70s. There were published letters in it, but there were only two. Why? Well, I better go read into my coffin street sunrise, y'know. Please print my address, I would love to have a pen-pal! Horrifyingly yours,

Audrey Sheehan, 13

12 Cherry Lane Dr.
Reading, MA 01867

Not only is my origin more fascinating, it's perfectly unadorned! More blood in my comics? Funny you should bring that up. THIS ISH! Hah-hah!

You must have bought an EAST COAST reprint, they were done in the 70s. We have some for sale, write for details. —VK

Russ, (and, of course, the Ghoulification).

Seeing the mention of Ron Mann's COMIC BOOK CONFIDENTIAL, I will notifi computer-izing EC Fan Addicts that Voyager came out with a CD-Rom called "Comic Book Confidential" that not only has the movie but biographies, bibliographies, information about other comic artists such as Robert Crumb and Lynda Barry, and some great comics preserved forever on CD Rom. Unfortunately, I didn't have enough memory in Hypercard to watch the movie, so if anyone out there on the crypt net knows where I can find a VHS copy, I would be forever indebted. As always, please print my address. (If you must find a nickname for me, I'd prefer She-is-over my own periodic lat name!) Dv71

Ashley Pegg

40 Pine Hill CT
Manchester, CT 06040-3111

I'd lend you mine, IF MANN WOULD COME THRU WITH THE TWO VHS COPIES his organization offered in exchange for our supply of visualaid. Maybe the ol' VK memory banks are bankrupt, but I don't retail beseeching a nickname to ya. How 'bout we name you after the famous Italian princess, Darialeura? —VK

Dear Vault Keeper,

You guys down at VAULT are doing an excellent job and I thank you for it! I was very impressed with #11 Jack Kathan did an excellent job with "What the Dog Dragged In".

I have a question for the Vault Keeper: Are you married? If not, would you like to be in the future? Please print my address because I would love to hear from other fans!

Theresa Goghia
Elizabeth Ruz

4136 N Pulaski
Chicago, IL 60641

No, I am not married. Yes, I would like to be in the future. In fact, I think I'll go there now (by reading WEIRD FANTASY #12, on sale this month). —VK

To whom it may concern,

Four years ago, I went into a comics shop. Being 80 years young at the time, I couldn't make heads or tails from looking at the racks! Gosh, so many characters, so much color, boxes of back-issues... some priced less than new ones. What's what? I purchased what I could understand at the time.

I've been a part-time flea market dealer of toy collectibles for 10 years now. I have about \$1,000 worth of collectible

toys, and 300 comics. I also have cards, sets and singles. I have decided to specialize in comics, subjects or subject not quite defined yet.

Being cautious, I am imploring your guidance. I wish to phase out my toy line and go with comics. What should I buy and why?

Richard S. Gairys

Worcester, MA

I'm ecstatically bound to say—buy, sell, trade EC comics! Maybe our readers have more balanced suggestions. —VK

Dear VK,

I really liked the story you wrote called "About Face" (VULT, # 6). I think that Steve should've stayed with Lydia. I like all of your stories. I keep wanting more. What did you think about the stories in #9?

Brian Burgeon

Ottawa, KS

Liked mine, hated his, liked mine, hated hers. (Surprised?) —VK

Dear Russ,

I really love CRYPT, VAULT and HAUNT. But I would like to see a new mag. I'd like to call it MONSTER MADNESS. In it, I don't want any nudity, bad words, etc. I would like to have scopes on movies (horror movies), scary stories, cartoons, interviews with directors, authors (like R. L. Stine), etc. Please consider this mag.

Justin Wiseman

Stout City, IA

Good idea! Can't help you, but it's a good idea! —VK

Dear EC,

I would like to start off by saying that I am a big fan of your comics. The reason I am writing is that I have an idea that I hope you like. My idea is to make GREENBROW a monthly comic. If you do not like my idea could you at least make two comics based on the movies? I am serious about this. I hope you answer it seriously. OK has the habit of giving goofy answers.

Michael Dooney

Saddle Brook, NJ

And, Goofy gives cryptic answers. But seriously, folks; another good idea. Can't help you, but... —VK

NEXT ISSUE



**I CALL THIS COLORFUL,
DREAMY TALE OF TERROR
IMPRESSED BY
A NIGHTMARE!**



FRED SWOONK TOOK THE STEAMING BILEX OF COFFEE FROM THE STOVE AND POURED HIMSELF A CUP! HE BLANDED UP AT THE KITCHEN CLOCK! IT WAS FOUR THIRTY-FIVE A.M.! A SLEEPY-EYED WOMAN ENTERED THE KITCHEN...

EMMA! I TOLD YOU A HUNDRED TIMES YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET UP FOR ME WHEN I'M ON THE EARLY SHIFT AT THE PLANT!

I KNOW, FRED! I COULDN'T SLEEP! I Woke UP OUT OF A NIGHTMARE!



MR. SWOONK SLIPPED ON HIS LEATHER JACKIE'S, PERCHED A CAP ON HIS GRAYING HEAD, AND TUCKED A TIE LINGER-BOX UNDER HIS ARM...

NIGHTMARE, ER? WHAT ABOUT?

I DREAMT I CUT MY FINGER! I KEPT SEEING THE BLOOD! IT WAS AWFUL!



FRED KISSED HIS WIFE AND
PATTED HER CHEEK! HE SMILED
WARMLY...

FORGET IT, HONEY!
IT WAS JUST A
DREAM! WHY DON'T
YOU TRY TO GET
SOME SLEEP TILL
THE KIDS GET UP?

JACKIE
WILL BE UP
AT SIX
THIRTY! I
MIGHT AS
WELL STAY
UP!



OHAY! DO WHAT
YOU LIKE! I ONLY
WISH I COULD
HAVE ABOUT THREE
MORE HOURS OF
SLEEP! NO-HUN!
WELL, 'BYE,
EMMA!

'BYE,
FRED!



MR. DWORKIN WENT OUT INTO
THE GREY DAWN, AND EMMA
WATCHED TILL HE TURNED THE
CORNER! THEN SHE WENT BACK
INSIDE...

NIGHT AS WELL START
GETTING BREAKFAST READY!



EMMA OPENED THE REFRIGERATOR AND WITHDREW
A CAN OF FROZEN CHARGE JUICE! THEN SHE
TOOK A CAN-OPENER FROM A DRAWER! SUDDENLY,
AS SHE PRESSED THE OPENER-KNIFE INTO THE
MORT CAN-LID...

OOOOOOOHH! I SLIPPED!



EMMA FELT A STING OF PAIN AS THE RAZOR-
SHARP CAN-LID CUT THROUGH THE FLESH! SHE
LIFTED THE WOUNDED FINGER AND STARED AT
THE SCARLET STREAM OODING FROM THE WOUND.

I... I CUT MY FINGER! THE... THE
BLOOD! IT'S JUST LIKE MY DREAM!



THAT AFTERNOON, FRED DWORKIN RETURNED HOME
FROM THE PRINTING PLANT WHERE HE WORKED! HE
NOTICED THE BANDAGE ON EMMA'S FINGER AND
QUESTIIONED HER ABOUT IT...

IT'S NOTHING, FRED!
MY HAND SLIPPED WHILE
I WAS OPENING A CAN
AND I CUT MY FINGER!
JUST A SCRATCH.

YOU OUGHT TO BE
MORE CAREFUL, EMMA!
I DON'T LIKE TO SEE
YOU HURT YOURSELF!



NOTHING WAS SAID ABOUT EMMA'S DREAM OR
ITS CONNECTION WITH HER ACCIDENT! BUT
THAT NIGHT...

JILL! JILL! LOOK
OUT! OH... LORD!

HUH? WHA...? EMMA!
EMMA! WAKE UP!



EMMA'S EYES BLINKED OPEN AND SHE GASPED...

WHAT... HAPPENED?

YOU WERE HAVING A NIGHTMARE! YOU WERE HOLLERING IN YOUR SLEEP!



I... I DREAMT THAT JILL WAS RUNNING DOWN THE STREET AND SHE TRIPPED AND FELL!

EIGHT YEAR OLDS DO THAT, EMMA!



SHE SCREAMED HER KNEES BADLY! THEY WERE BLEEDING! HER LEGS WERE COVERED...

GO BACK TO SLEEP, EMMA! IT WAS ONLY A DREAM!



BUT THE NEXT MORNING, AS JILL WAS COMING HOME FROM SCHOOL FOR LUNCH, SHE BEGAN TO RUN! EMMA WATCHED HER FROM THE FRONT STEPS! A COLO SHILL DREPT UP HER SPIKE! SHE TRIED TO RUN UP TO STOP HER DAUGHTER!



JILL WAS SCRAPED HER KNEES BADLY! HER LEGS WERE COVERED WITH THE BLOOD THAT FLOWED FROM THE ABRASIONS! SHE WAS CRYING SO LOUDLY THAT SHE NEVER HEARD HER MOTHER'S HORRIFIED WHISPER AS EMMA LOOKED DOWN AT THE RAW AND BLEEDING PRUISES...



"TWICE! BAST! TWICE I DREAMT, AND TWICE IT HAPPENED!"

JILL'S ANKWARD LEGS TANGLED AS SHE PITCHED FORWARD! FOR A SPLIT SECOND, SHE SEEMED TO HAVE THERE! THEN SHE HIT THE PAVEMENT, BOOKS FLYING! EMMA RUSHED TOWARD HER...



BUT THAT NIGHT, FRED OWEN'S SCOFFED AT HIS WIFE'S CLAIM...

BUT I TOLD YOU YESTERDAY MORNING THAT I DREAMT I OUT MYSELF! THEN I DID! AND LAST NIGHT I DREAMT THAT JILL...

COINCIDENCE, EMMA! PURE COINCIDENCE! I FORGOT ABOUT IT!



THAT NIGHT, EMMA FOUND IT DIFFICULT FALLING ASLEEP! WHEN SHE FINALLY DOZED OFF, SHE BEGAN TO DREAM AGAIN! THIS TIME IT WAS ABOUT HER TEEN-AGE SON, JACKIE! JACKIE WAS SITTING DOWN HOLDING A ROUND OBJECT...TURNING IT...AND TURNING IT! A LOOK OF HORROR WAS PAINTED ON HIS EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD FACE...



EMMA SAT BOLT UPRIGHT! SHE BEGAN TO SOB...



THE NEXT DAY, EMMA QUESTIONED HER SON AT BREAKFAST...



BUT THAT NIGHT, AS EMMA WAS WASHING AWAY THE SUPPER DISHES...



A BLOOD-CURLING SCREECH, A CRASH OF GLASS, AND JACKIE LAY MEASURING...HALF-IN, HALF-OUT OF A SMASHED AUTOMOBILE





IT WAS ABOUT TWO-THIRTY THAT NIGHT THAT THE TELEPHONE RANG! EMMA BASHED! FRED LOOKED AT HER. THE COLOR FADING FROM HIS FACE...



EMMA WENT TO THE PHONE AND LIFTED THE RECEIVER HESITANTLY! SHE LISTENED FOR A MOMENT... THEN CHOKED OUT A SQUEEZY WHIMPER AND BLUNTED TO THE FLOOR...



FRED RUSHED TO HIS WIFE'S SIDES! SHE MOTIONED TO THE PHONE! FRED PICKED UP THE CAROLING RECEIVER! THE VOICE ON THE OTHER END WAS WEAK BUT RECOGNIZABLE...



JACKIE WAS ALL RIGHT! THE CAR WAS A WRECK, BUT HE'D HAD NO BONES BROKEN. JUST A FEW SCRATCHES! THEY PUT HIM TO BED!



EVER AFTER THEY WERE BOTH IN BED, EMMA LAN-BASTED HER HUSBAND...



EMMA FINALLY FELL ASLEEP! HER DREAM WAS STRANGE! HER DREAM WAS... SLEEPY! A ROARING AND A HUMMING FILLED HER EARS! AND THEN SHE COULD SEE IT PLAINLY... THE PRESS... THE HUGE COLOR-PRIN... AND FRED WAY UP ON TOP...



SUDDENLY, EMMA'S DREAM WAS FILLED WITH FRED'S SCREAM AS HE PLUMGED INTO THE ROARING MACHINERY.



EMMA LEAPED OUT OF BED AND HURRIED INTO THE KITCHEN! FRED WASN'T THERE...

"HE'S GONE, ALREADY! GONE TO WORK! HE'S GONE TO DIE! THREE TIMES I DREAMT OF ACCIDENTS, AND THREE TIMES MY DREAMS CAME TRUE! AND NOW I DREAMT THAT FRED IS GOING TO FALL INTO THE PRESS! I'VE GOT TO SAVE HIM!"



FRED STOOD ATOP THE GIANT COLOR PRESS, CHECKING ITS OPERATION! AT FIRST, HE DID NOT HEAR EMMA'S FRANTIC CRIES! THEN, AS HER HIGH-PITCHED VOICE REACHED HIM ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE MACHINERY, FRED SPUN AROUND! HIS FOOT SLIPPED OVER AN OIL-SLICK STAINING THE NARROW PLATFORM AND ENDED UP FROM UNDER HIM! FOR A MOMENT, HE TOTTERED CRAZILY... THEN PLUMGED OFF HIS HIGH PERCH INTO THE THROBBING METAL GIANT.



IT WAS HORRIBLE! FRED'S BODY WAS CAUGHT BETWEEN THE ROLLERS OF THE GIANT COLOR PRINTING PRESS AND CRUSHED TO A MANGLED PULP! BLOOD SPATTERED THE GLEAMING METAL GEARS! EMMA COVERED HER EYES AND SCREAMED...



SUDDENLY, EMMA WAS AWAKE! SHE SAT UP IN HER BED AND STARED INTO THE DARKNESS! THE BED BESIDE HER WAS EMPTY...



EMMA DRESSED QUICKLY AND STARTED OUT FOR THE PRINTING PLANT! ALL THE WAY, SHE PRAYED THAT SHE WOULD NOT BE TOO LATE! SHE RAN AS FAST AS SHE COULD! SHE ARRIVED BREATHELESS AND EXHAUSTED...



HEH, HEH! YES! EMMA'S FOURTH DREAM CAME TRUE, TOO! COURSE, MAYBE IT WOULDN'T HAVE IF SHE'D KEPT HER MOUTH SHUT! FRED WOULD NOT HAVE TURNED AROUND AND SLIPPED! OH, BY THE WAY, IF THE MAGAZINE IS LATE GETTING TO YOU, NEWSSTAND, THE EXPLANATION IS SIMPLE! YOU SEE, THEY PRINT THIS MAG ON THE COLOR PRESS — FRED'LL INTO IT! DOES 'EM TWO DAYS TO SCRAPE IT CLEAN! SO IF YOU SEE ANY RED BLOTCHES ANYWHERE... HEH, HEH! OH! WANT TO GET MY BACK RUBBED? READ MY COLUMN, THE RAULER, KEEPERS CORNER!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! PREY! THAT'S A HORROR STORY! THE VAULT-KEEPER TELLS A GOOD FAIRY TALE! I'LL TELL YOU A HORROR STORY! YEA, IT'S YOUR HOST IN THE CRYPT OF TERROR... THE CRYPT-KEEPER... WELCOMING YOU ONCE MORE! COME IN AND SET DOWN ON THAT BLOOD-STAINED AUTO SEAT! IT'S A REMENTO OF THE TERROR-FALE I'M ABOUT TO RELATE! READY? AH, I SEE I HAVE THE GREEN LIGHT! WHAT? OH, THAT'S YOUR PAGE? WELL, HERE GOES ANYWAY! SET A GOOD SHIP ON THE FLOOR MAT! I CALL THIS CHILLER...

THE DEATH WAGON!



HERMAN KITCH, ONE OF THE PARTNERS OF "BINK AND KITCH," USED BARK'S SHOCK HIS HEAD AS HE SURVEYED THE BEAT-UP BLUE COUPE PARKED AT THE CURB...

SORRY, MISTER! YOU CAN KEEP 'ER! THIS WRECKO COST ME A FORTUNE TO PUT IN SHAPE!

BUT I MUST SELL, MANTON! I NEED THE MONEY!



HERMAN SHRUGGED! HE 'BALED AROUND THE CAR ONCE MORE... KICKED AT THE MUDDY TIRES... THEN STROKED HIS CHIN THOUGHTFULLY...

FOUR HUNDRED BUCKS! THAT'S THE BEST I CAN DO!

FOUR HUNDRED! WHY I'D BE CHAST TO SELL IT AT THAT PRICE! I...

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT, BUD! IT'S TWENTY MILES TO THE NEXT TOWN! IF YOU THINK YOU CAN MAKE IT TRY THERE!

I... I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TAKE YOUR OFFER! I NEED THE MONEY IMMEDIATELY!

IN THE SNACK THAT STOOD AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE 'BINK AND KITCH USED CAR LOT' AMOS SMILED AS HE WATCHED THE TRANSACTION GOING ON AT THE CUBE...

LOOKS LIKE HERMAN'S CLOSING A DEAL ON THAT COMPE! I PITY THE POOR SUCKER WHO BUYS IT FROM US!

LATER THAT DAY, HERMAN AND AMOS SURVEYED THEIR NEWLY ACQUIRED CAR IN THE GARAGE AT THE REAR OF THE LOT...

WELL, AMOS! WE'VE TURNED BACK THE SPEEDOMETER SEVENTEEN THOUSAND MILES AND REPLACED THE TIRES WITH RE-CAPS! THE TUNES ARE IN BAD SHAPE, SO WE'LL LEAVE 'EM!

YEAN! THE GUY WHO BUYS THIS WHICE FROM US WON'T FIND OUT ABOUT THAT TILL HE HAS A FLAT!

A POLISHING JOB AND SHE'LL BE ALL SET!

AND WE'LL SET EIGHT HUNDRED BUCKS FOR 'ER, AT LEAST!

BT THE WAY, AMOS! THE TRANSMISSION IN THIS MARCONI SEDAN WE BOUGHT YESTERDAY IS SHOT! IT SOUNDS LIKE THE CAR'S FALLING APART, IT SHOOKS SO BAD!

PACK IT WITH SAWDUST! THAT WILL KEEP IT FROM RATTLING FOR A COUPLE OF HUNDRED MILES!

AND THAT CON-VERTIBLE'S GOT A CRACKED RADI-ATOR! WATER KEEPS LEAKIN' OUT!

FOUR IN SOME GREASE! IT'LL CLOSE UP THE CRACK AS LONG AS THE WATER DOESN'T GET TOO HOT! ONCE THEY DRIVE 'EM AWAY... WE DON'T KNOW FROM NOTHIN'!

KID BUYS, EH, KIDDEST THEY KNOW ALL THE PRICES, HUNT? WE'LL HOLD ON TO YOUR EYE-BALLS...YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET! THESE BUYS ARE REALLY CROOKS! JUST KEEP READING! YOU'LL SEE WHAT I MEAN...

I LOOKED OVER THIS TWO-DOOR WE PICKED UP THIS MORNING. HERMAN! THE STEERING ASSEMBLY'S ALMOST GONE!

WRAP 'ER WITH WOOD! THAT'LL HOLD IT TOGETHER TILL WE CAN GET RID OF THE HEART!

THIS GRAY BROWN NEEDS NEW BRAKE-LEADINGS, HERMAN! THE BRAKES DON'T HOLD!

BRAKE LEADINGS COST MONEY, AMOS! GUT UP AN OLD BUNKER TUBE AND PUT THE STRIPS IN! IT'LL DO THE JOB FOR A FEW MILES!

THE BATTERY IN THIS FOUR-DOOR IS DEAD. HERMAN! WE'LL HAVE TO PUT IN A NEW ONE!

NONSENSE! WE'LL JAZZ IT UP WITH THIS POWDER I PICKED UP! IT'LL HOLD A CHARGE FOR A WEEK OR SO! THE PLAYERS'LL GO TO POT, BUT IT WON'T BE OUR WORRY BY THAT TIME!

I GOT A BUMP ON THE STATION WAGON WITH A BROKEN AXLE, HERMAN!

GOOD! WE CAN WELD THE AXLE! LONG AS THE BUMP DON'T HIT A HARD BUMP, IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT!

THE BRAKES ARE BAD IN THIS COUPE, HERMAN! YOU HAVE TO JUMP 'EM TO STOP! SHE'S PROBABLY LOW ON HYDRAULIC FLUID!

PUT IN SOME WATER! HYDRAULIC FLUID'S EXPENSIVE!

AS YOU CAN SEE, THE USED-CAR LOT OF SINK AND RITCH WAS CROWDED WITH FAULTY AUTOMOBILES THAT HAD BEEN PURCHASED CHEAPLY AND 'REPAIRED' CHEAPLY... AND WHICH WOULD ULTIMATELY BE SOLD FOR MANY TIMES THEIR WORTH! BUT WHAT IS MORE DELIGHTFUL, THE CARS WERE POTENTIAL DEATH-TRAPS...

HEY, AMOS! THERE'S AN OLD COODER AND HIS WIFE LOOKIN' THE HEAPS OVER!

LOOK LIKE A COUPLE O' JACKETS 'TWE!

BROGEE, KIDNAP? I THOUGHT SO! NOW, THIS RICH AND COUPLE HAS COME TO SINK AND KITCH'S USED-CAR LOT FOR AN AUTO! THEY'VE SKIMPED AND SAVED NICKLES AND DINES FOR TWO YEARS TO ACCUMULATE ENOUGH MONEY TO AFFORD THE LUXURY OF OWNING THEIR OWN AUTOMOBILE!



YES, SIR? CAN I HELP YOU?



ESTHER... SHE'S MY WIFE... AND I AM INTERESTED IN BUYING A CAR... WE'D LIKE TO SPEND ABOUT A THOUSAND DOLLARS!

I THINK I HAVE JUST THE THING YOU'RE LOOKING FOR! THIS BABY HERE! PRACTICALLY NEW... ONLY ONE OWNER BEFORE YOU! USED IT ON SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS! LOW MILEAGE...

HOW MUCH?



SO THE OLD COUPLE BOUGHT THE COUPE WITH THE WATERED-HYDRAULIC FLUID... SINK AND KITCH MADE SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS ON THAT DEAL! THEN THERE WAS THE POOR FACTORY WORKER WHO WANTED TO BRIGHTEN THE GRAY LINES OF HIS LOVED ONES BY TAKING THEM FOR DRIVES IN THE COUNTRY ON HIS DAY OFF!



BEST BUY ON THE LOT, SIR! A STATION WAGON IS JUST WHAT YOU NEED! SIMPLY FILE THE KIDS IN THE BACK...

THE FACTORY WORKER PURCHASED THE STATION WAGON WITH THE WELDED AXLE! A YOUNG SALESMAN, WHO NEEDED A CAR FOR BUSINESS, ALSO CAME TO SINK AND KITCH...



JUST LOOK AT THE FRUNK SPACE IN THIS TWO-DOOR, MISTER! IT'S MADE FOR A SALESMAN! LIKE ME! BUT THAT OWNED IT WAS STRICKEN WITH POLIO... IT'S BEEN ON BLOCKS SINCE TWO WEEKS AFTER HE BOUGHT IT!

LOOKS GOOD TO ME! WHERE DO I SIGN?

SO THE BUSINESS COUPE WITH THE FAMILY STEERING ASSEMBLY HELD TOGETHER BY WIRES WAS SOLD! SINK AND KITCH MADE IT VERY EASY TO BUY THEIR DEATH TRAP...



I... I'VE GOT TO BUY A CAR, BUT I DON'T THINK THE BANK WILL GRANT A LOAN! YOU SEE...

LISTEN, BUD! TELL YOU WHAT! ORDINARILY WE DON'T DO THIS, BUT...

IF YOU KEEP IT QUIET, WE'LL FINANCE YOU OURSELVES! OF COURSE THE INTEREST RATE WILL BE A LITTLE HIGHER THAN THE LEGAL LIMIT! SAY... TEN PERCENT...

TEN PERCENT? PER MONTH?



HEY, HEY! I'LL SAY THAT'S A LITTLE RISKIER THAN THE LEGAL LIMIT! IT MATTER, KIDDIEST? YOU LOOK MAD! DON'T LIKE AMOS AND HERMAN? WELL, YOU'LL LIKE 'EM LESS AS WE GO ALONG! JUST KEEP READING!



THE OLD COUPLE WERE THE FIRST TO GO! THEY'D DRIVEN UP A MOUNTAIN ROAD IN THEIR NEW USED COUPE! AS THEY CAME DOWN A STEEP CURVE, SKIDTING A CLIFF.



NATURALLY! WATERED-HYDRAULIC FLUID WON'T ACTIVATE A CAR'S BRAKES ON A STEEP INCLINE LIKE THAT!



AND SO THE PEACEFUL MOUNTAIN AIR WAS SHATTERED BY THE IMPACT OF TONS OF STEEL, AND BLASTS FLATTENING AGAINST A WALL OF ROCK! AND AS THE LOOK OF THE DIN FADED AWAY, A TWISTED MESS OF METAL AND DEAD BODIES ADORNED THE HIGHWAY...



NEXT CAME THE FACTORY WORKER AND HIS STATION WAGON! THE PONTIC WAS OVER AND HE WAS SPEEDING HIS WIFE AND FIVE KIDS HOME.



THE FRONT WHEELS AVOIDED THE SAFING RUT IN THE ROAD, BUT THE RIGHT REAR WHEEL SMASHED INTO IT... THE REAR WHEEL FASTENED TO THE WELDED AXLE! THE STATION WAGON SWAYED CRAZILY FOR A MOMENT, THEN SPUN OVER AS THE WHEEL COLLAPSED...



ONCE AGAIN, CRUSHED STEEL AND SHATTERED GLASS COVERED A BLOOD-STAINED HIGHWAY...



HEH, HEH! SETTW A LITTLE
NOT UNDER THE COLLAR,
KIDDIES? NOW DO YOU THINK
THE OLD COUPLE FELT...ON
THE FACTORY WORKER AND
HIS FAMILY'S WELL, KEEP
HEARD?! WE'LL REACH THE
BOILING POINT SOON!



THE SALESMAN WHO BOUGHT
THE BUSINESS COUPE WAS NEXT
TO GO! THE WINDS STEERING
ASSEMBLY FELL APART AS THE
CAR WAS TURNING INTO A
BUST INTERSECTION...

LOOK OUT!

IT'S OUT OF
CONTROL!



TWO PEDESTRIANS WENT
ALONG ON THAT SIDE! RIGHT
UP THE SIDEWALK AND INTO A
BRICK WALL, THE CAR HUNTLED.

YAAAAAEEEEEE!



THEY HAD TO CUT THE SALESMAN OUT OF THE
WHEELS WITH A BLOW-TORCH! HE NEVER CAME TO!
ONE OF THE PEDESTRIANS WAS KILLED INSTANTLY,
THE OTHER DIED ON THE WAY TO THE HOSPITAL!
A POLICE INSPECTOR CAME TO SEE AMOS AND
HERMAN...

THREE HORRIBLE ACCIDENTS...
AND EVERY CAR CAME FROM
YOUR LOT!

LOOK HERE,
INSPECTOR!



WE'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE
FOR WHAT PEOPLE DO TO
THEIR CARS! WHEN THOSE
AUTOS LEFT OUR LOT,
THEY WERE IN PERFECT
CONDITION!

DO YOU THINK
WE'D LET A FAMILY
CAR LEAVE THIS
ESTABLISHMENT,
INSPECTOR?



I DON'T KNOW, BOYS, BUT
TOMORROW MORNING I'M GOING
TO FIND OUT! I'M ASKING
THE COURT TO ISSUE A WAR-
RANT PERMITTING ME TO
EXAMINE EVERY CAR ON
YOUR LOT! SOOO EVENING,
GENTLEMEN!

HAPPY TO
HAVE YOU GO
SO, INSPECTOR!

ANY
TIME,
INSPECTOR!



AFTER THE POLICE INSPECTOR LEFT THE 'SINE AND
KITCH' USED CAR LOT...

SOOO LONG,
HERMAN! WHAT WILL
WE DO? TOMORROW
MORNING...

THAT'S A LONG WAY
OFF! WE HAVE ALL
NIGHT TO FIX UP
THOSE HEAPS! C'MON!
LET'S GET BUSY!



UNLASH! MUSTN'T *PEEK* AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE! YOU'LL *GET TO IT!* AND DON'T WORRY! AMOS AND HERMAN WON'T *FIX* THINGS BY MORNING! IN FACT, THEY WON'T BE *ALIVE* BY MORNING! WHY? BECAUSE THAT NIGHT... WHILE THEY SCURRIED ABOUT THE GARAGE REPAIRING THE CARS, PROPERLY THIS TIME... IN CEREMONY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRYSIDE, THINGS UNDER GRABBLE-GRABBLE-MUD STIRRED.

THE REMAINS OF AN USED COUPLE... *RIPPED AND TORN* FROM THE IMPACT OF THEIR DEATH-DEALING CRASH... LUMBERED TOWARD THE USED-CAR LOT...



A SALESMAN'S COUPLE, WASHED AND ROTTING, CRAWLING WITH THE SLIME OF THE BRAVE, STUMBLED OVER THE DARK LANDSCAPE...



A SINGLE FILE OF SHADY FORMS, SHREDS OF FLESH FALLING FROM THEIR MANGLED BODIES, STAMPEDED ACROSS THE ROAD. A DEAD FACTORY WORKER, HIS WIFE, AND FIVE SMALLER COPIES.



AND IN THEIR DIMLY-LIT GARAGE, AMOS SINE AND HERMAN KITCH LOOKED UP FROM THEIR FRANTIC EFFORTS AS THE THINGS CONVERGED UPON THE DOORWAY, MOVING TOWARD THEM.



IN THE MORNING, WHEN THE POLICE INSPECTOR CAME WITH HIS WARRANT, THERE WERE NO CARS ON THE LOT TO INSPECT! BUT IN THE GARAGE, HE FOUND ONE! IT STOOD BROTERQUELY IN A POOL OF DRIED BLOOD! AMOS'S SKULL GRINNED FROM WHERE ONE HEADLIGHT SHOULD HAVE BEEN... HERMAN'S, FROM THE OTHER! TWO RED TORSUES HAD REPLACED THE WINDSHIELD WIPERS! EYE-BALLS STARED FROM PARKING-LIGHT BUCKETS! SEVERED HANDS SERVED AS DOOR HANDLES! AIN-WHITE SKIN REPLACED SLIP-COVERS! DISJOINED FEET SUBSTITUTED FOR CLUTCH, BRAKE, GAS, AND LIGHT-DIMMING PEDALS! BLOOD FLEED THE GAS TANK, INTERESTING THE CHAIN-CASE! BONES WERE USED FOR THE REAR SHIFT, STEERING WHEEL SPOKES, PISTON-RODS, AND OTHER STRUCTURE! THIS WAS TRULY A KITCH AND SINE CAR...



HER, HER! AND IT WAS MADE OF EVERYTHING... *BUT* THE KITCHER SINE. EH, KIDDEST SO AMOS AND HERMAN FINALLY WOUND UP AS PARTS... INSTEAD OF PART-*HERS*! KNOW WHAT? SOMEBODY EVER GOT UP ENOUGH NERVE TO SEE IF



THE SCARY MESS WOULD *RUN*? SO I DROPPED OVER TO WHERE THEY WERE KEEPING IT ONE NIGHT! GOT IT *STARTED*, TOO! TROUBLE WAS IT KEPT *STALLING* ON ME! SEEMS *HEARTS* DON'T MAKE GOOD *FUEL-PUMPS*! 'ERE, NOW!

**HEE-HEE! I'M GOING TO DO
LIKE THESE TWO GOOFY
GHOULUNATICS, AND GET MY
OWN SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ALL
THE EC COMICS!**



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GLAD VAULT #1



GLAD VAULT #2



GLAD VAULT #3



GLAD VAULT #4



GLAD VAULT #5



GLAD VAULT #6



GLAD WEIRD #1



GLAD WEIRD #2



GLAD WEIRD #3



GLAD WEIRD #4



GLAD HAUNT #1



GLAD HAUNT #2

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#5 CRYPT 48 (1964)

ORANGE 8 (1964)

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HORROR

THE VAULT OF HORROR



LEGENDARY 1950s EC COMICS!

H
O
R
R
O
R



NO. 14
JAN



200
2TH
CANADA

THE VAULT OF

HORROR

FEATURING...



THE MAD GHOUL



THE OLD WITCH



THE CRYPTID



BACK ISSUES!!

THE COMIC YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS IS PART OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL, FACSIMILE REPRINTING OF THE FAMOUS (AND INFAMOUS!) EC COMICS LINE OF THE EARLY 1950s! WE STARTED WITH THE FIRST ISSUE OF EACH TITLE AND ARE ON OUR WAY TO THE BITTER END! GET ON THE BANDWAGON, AND FILL IN THE GAPS IN YOUR COLLECTION FROM THIS BACKLIST!



CRYPT #1



CRYPT #2



CRYPT #3



CRYPT #4



CRYPT #5



CRYPT #6



WEIRD #1



WEIRD #2



WEIRD #3



WEIRD #4



WEIRD #5



WEIRD #6



SHOCK #1



SHOCK #2



SHOCK #3



SHOCK #4



SHOCK #5



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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEHEHE! WELL, IT'S GOOD TO BE WITH YOU AGAIN! AND IT'S SO PLEASANT AND COMFORTABLE HERE IN THE MURKY COUPONS OF *THE VAULT!* WELL, I'VE PREPARED A *SPECIAL TREAT* FOR YOU THIS TIME! THE STRANGE, SCARY GOINGS IN THIS STORY WILL GIVE YOU SOMETHING ESPECIALLY *WORTH* TO MULL OVER... IN YOUR *AMUSEMENTS!* HEHEHEHEHE! SO PULL UP A GINVESTOR AND HAVE YOURSELF A SEAT... WHILE I RECOUNT THE TALE CALLED...

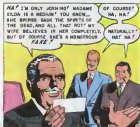
SEANCE!



WELL, FEARLESS, YOU'VE
CONVINCED ME! I'LL GIVE
YOU MY PERSONAL CHECK
FOR TWENTY THOUSAND
DOLLARS RIGHT NOW!

EXCELLENT, MR.
CHALMERS! YOU'VE
MADE A WISE
DECISION, I CAN
ASSURE YOU!





MR. CHALMERS LEFT...AND THE TWO REMAINING MEN WAITED IN SILENCE UNTIL THEY SAW HIM LEAVE THE BUILDING AND ENTER HIS EXPENSIVE CAR.



HEL, HEL! WELL, IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, THE TWO CONFIDENCE MEN MADE QUITE A DENT IN MR. CHALMERS'S BANK ACCOUNT! BUT ONE NIGHT, AS HE ENTERED THEIR OFFICE WITHOUT THEIR SHOWING IT...



BOY, WHAT A SOFT TOUCH CHALMERS IS!



HA, HA! IF HE EVER FOUND OUT THERE REALLY ISN'T ANY BUSINESS AT ALL, HE'D HAVE A FIT!



SO? YOU'VE BEEN CHEATING ME! SWINDLE ME! INSURE? I'LL HAVE YOU PUT IN JAIL!



CHALMERS!

NOW... HOW DON'T BE RASTY CHALMERS!



TO TELL THE TRUTH I'VE BEEN SUCH A FOOL AS TO LET YOU DUPE ME, AND FOR ME? WELL, I'LL SEE MY LAWYER TOMORROW MORNING AND TAKE ACTION AGAINST YOU! YOU'LL SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIVES IN PRISON!



FURIOUS, MR. CHALMERS STORMED OUT SLAMMING THE OFFICE DOOR BEHIND HIM! FROM A WINDOW, THEY SAW HIM ENTER HIS CAR AND DRIVE OFF...

HE'S GOING HOME! WHAT'VE WE GONE TO DO!



...WONT SO ANYBODY TO LEAVE TOWN? WE'VE GOT TO THINK OF SOME- THING ELSE! ANY? HAVE IT? C'MON!



THE TWO MEN RACED FROM THE BUILDING TO THEIR CAR! WITH A GRINDING OF GEARS, THEY STARTED OUT AFTER MR. CHALMERS...



WE CAN'T AFFORD ANY TROUBLE WITH THE LAW! THERE'S ONLY ONE THING WE CAN DO!

YES, YOU'RE RIGHT! WE HAVE TO CATCH HIM BEFORE HE GETS HOME... AND JEZZ HIM!



IN SILENCE, THEY ROARED ALONG THE LONELY HIGHWAY FOR HALF AN HOUR BEFORE FINALLY CATCHING SIGHT OF ANOTHER CAR'S TAIL-LIGHTS...



THAT'S HIM ALL RIGHT! WE'RE LUCKY THIS IS A LITTLE-USED ROAD!

COME ALONGSIDE OF HIM! FORCE HIM OFF THE ROAD WHEN WE REACH THE TOP OF THE HILL!

THE TWO AUTOMOBILES CARRIED ALONG THE NARROW DESERTED HIGHWAY AT BREAKNECK SPEED, RISING SWIFTLY UP! UP! UP! UNTIL THE CREST OF THE HILL WAS REACHED, AND THEN—

NOW! NOW! HIT HIM!!



A SLIGHT TURN OF THE WHEEL... A MENTLE, YET FIRM NUDGE... AND MR. CHALMERS'S CAR HURTLED FROM THE ROAD THROUGH THE BARRIERS, CRUMPLING AND BREAKING AS IT SCHERMAILED, BOUNCED AND CRASHED GRABLY DOWN TO THE BASE OF THE CLIFF, HUNDREDS OF FEET BELOW—



SEVERAL DAYS AFTER MR. CHALMERS WAS BURIED, THE TWO SHROUDERS PAID THEIR RESPECTS TO THE BEREAVED WIDOW—



GANTHER AND DENT OFFERED THEIR CONDOLENCES, AND THEN SLITLY TURNED THE CONVERSATION TO BUSINESS AND WERE *VERY* SURPRISED—





IN A FEW DAYS, GENTLEMEN... AFTER I HAVE SPOKEN WITH MY HUSBAND, I SHALL GIVE YOU MY DECISION!

...OH...YES, OF COURSE! MRS. CHALMERS! WELL, WE'LL BE LEAVING NOW! 8 O'CLOCK-NIGHT!



LATER, IN THEIR OWN APARTMENT...
HEAST IT? A FORTUNE WITHIN OUR GRASP AND SHE HAS TO TALK TO SPIRITS?

WE'RE NOT LIKED YET! WE CAN STILL GET HER MONEY! IF MADAME SILDIA GIVES HER OKAY!



MADAME SILDIA! THAT CROOK!

THAT'S RIGHT, BEH! A BROODFOOT TO MAKE A DISHONEST BUCK... AND IF WE MAKE IT WORTH HER WHILE...



BEH, BEH! MY, AREN'T THEY TWO SWEET BOYS? SO CONSIDERATE AND THOUGHTFUL! WELL, ANYWAY, THEY SCOROUNGED AROUND AND FINALLY FOUND WHERE MADAME SILDIA LIVED... AND THEY WENT TO SEE HER!



IN ANSWER TO THEIR REQUESTS, MADAME SILDIA HERSELF OWNED THE HEAVY OAKEN DOOR AND USHERED THEM SILENTLY INTO THE GRAND ROOM...

YOU WISH TO COMMUNE WITH THE SPIRITS, GENTLEMEN?

NO...WE WISH TO COMMUNE WITH YOU, MADAME SILDIA... ABOUT A MUTUAL FRIEND... MRS. CHALMERS!



INDEED? MRS. CHALMERS IS A *FOKE WOMAN*? WHAT IS IT YOU WISH TO SPEAK OF?

HER HUSBAND DIED LATELY... AND IT WOULD BE MOST *PROFITABLE* TO US IF THE SPIRITS DEEMED IT WISE FOR HER TO CONTINUE TO DO BUSINESS WITH US!



...NATURALLY, IT WOULD BE *PROFITABLE* FOR YOU, ALSO, IF YOU COULD SOMEHOW *COOPERATE* A LITTLE FURTHER...

I BELIEVE WE UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER! WHAT DO YOU HAVE IN MIND?



THE NEXT EVENING, MADAME SILDÁ ADMITTED SENT, SANTHOR AND MRS. CHALMERS TO THE SEANCE ROOM. SHE CLOSED THE DOOR AND LOOKED IT WITH A KEY THAT WAS ATTACHED TO A CHAIN AROUND HER NECK.



WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A DIM ILLUMINATION OVER THE SMALL, CIRCULAR TABLE IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOOR, THE ROOM WAS IN DARKNESS. SOFT AROMAS FROM STRANGE INCENSE FLOATED IN THE STILL AIR, AND FROM SOMEWHERE WEIRD MUSIC WAS PLAYING...



THEY TOOK THEIR PLACES AT THE TABLE AND JOINED HANDS. THEY FOCUSED THEIR ATTENTION ON MADAME SILDÁ. HER EYES WERE CLOSED, HER FACE LIFTED SLIGHTLY TO THE CEILING...



MADAME SILDÁ BEGAN A SING-SONG CHANT... AND AS BEADS OF PERSPIRATION FORMED ON THE BROW OF THE MEN, MRS. CHALMERS STARED IN UTTER FASCINATION. THE LIGHT BEGAN DIMMER, DIMMER... AND THEY WATCHED AS MADAME SILDÁ'S FACE SLOWLY FUSED WITH, THEN MELTED INTO THE EBONY BLACKNESS...



GEORGE DREW SEATED BETWEEN MADAME GILDA AND BEN GANTHER, HERE AND CROFT SILENTLY TO THE DRAPERIES THAT HUNG BY THE WALLS...

MRS. CHALMERS WISHED TO SPEAK WITH HER HUSBAND FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD. ARE YOU THERE, JOHN CHALMERS?



MADAME GILDA WAS IN A 'DEEP TRANCE' THE MISTERS TICKED BY INTERMINABLY WHILE SHE TRIED CONTINUALLY TO MAKE CONTACT...

PLEASE! GEORGE SHOULD HAVE THE MAKE-UP ON BY NOW! WISH HE'D HURRY... SET THIS WHOLE THING OVER WITH!



JOHN? JOHN, ARE YOU THERE? CAN YOU HEAR ME?

MRS. CHALMERS! LOOK! I CAN SEE HIM! THERE HE IS!



WEALTH-LIKE, ITS LUMINOUS FACE GLOWING DISTORTEDLY IN THE BLACKNESS, A FORM SEEMED TO FLOAT AND SWAY SILENTLY TOWARD THE TABLE. MRS. CHALMERS, THINKING IT HER HUSBAND, SPoke EXCITEDLY.

OH, JOHN, DEAR! I KNOW YOU'D APPEAR! CAN YOU HEAR ME, JOHN? SAY SOMETHING TO ME!

...KEEPS COMING CLOSER! WHY DOESN'T HE SAY SOMETHING?



JOHN, THESE MEN WANT ME TO CONTINUE INVESTING OUR MONEY WITH THEM! SHOULD I? SHOULD I? SHOULD I? WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER ME, JOHN?

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! HE DOESN'T HAVE TO OVERDO IT! SAY HE'S HE'S WALKING RIGHT UP TO THE TABLE!



JOHN? ANSWER ME! JOHN? WHA WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

HEY? STOP! YOU FOOL! YOU'LL RUIN EVERYTHING! GEORGE! STOP IT! YOU... YOU'RE GHOSTING ME!



JOHN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? STOP! STOP IT! YOU'RE... YOU'RE KILLING HIM!! EEEAA-AGGH!!

STOP! THIS WAS NOT THE PLAN!





MY HUSBAND FILLED
MR. GANTHER? HE
STRANGLER HIM AND
RETURNED TO THE
SPIRIT WORLD?

NO, NO! IT WAS NOT
YOUR HUSBAND! IT
WAS MR. DENT!



WHAT? WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

LISTEN TO ME! GANTHER AND DENT
BROUGHT YOU HERE TO SHOW ID THAT
DENT COULD IMPREGNATE YOUR
HUSBAND, AND ADVISE YOU TO GIVE
THEM MORE MONEY! BUT I DON'T
KNOW THAT WOULD HAPPEN!



...AND, AND YOU
WERE PART OF
THEIR PLAN TO
SHINGLE
ME? I... I CAN'T
BELIEVE IT!

DENT KILLED
MR. GANTHER!
BUT HE CAN'T
ESCAPE! THE
DOOR IS STILL
LOCKED!



HE'S HIDING
OVER THERE,
BEHIND THE
DRAPERIES!

WE'LL SEE
ABOUT THIS,
MRS. DENT!



THE TWO WOMEN RUSHED TO THE
DRAPES AND PULLED THEM ASIDE...
LOOK ON THE
FLOOR! IT'S
MR. DENT!
HE'S DEAD!

... HIS FACE!
THE LOOK OF
TERROR!
HE'S BEEN
STRANGLER
TOO!



BUT... BUT A PERSON
CAN'T STRANGLER
HIMSELF! IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE!

I KNOW THAT... BUT...
NO ONE ELSE WAS IN
THE ROOM BUT US!
WHO...? HOW...?



HEH, HEH, HEH! YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS
NONE, KIDDER! MAYBE JOHN CHALMERS DID
RETURN! HEY! HEY! HEY! CAN HE A STRONG SHOOTING.
ANYWAY, IF YOU ASKED GANTHER
AND DENT IF THEY WERE REALLY
SERIOUS ABOUT CHEATING
POOR MR. CHALMERS, THEY
WOULD'VE ANSWERED, "NO, NO...
WE WERE ONLY JOOKING!"
HEH! HEH! NOW I'LL TURN
YOU OVER TO THE DRAFT
KEEPER! HE'S GOT A TALE
COMING 'ROUND THAT'S
AS FUNNY AS HE IS!
DID YOU LAUGH?

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELL, NOW THAT THE VAULT-KEEPER HAS WARNED YOU UP I'LL REALLY BATTLE YOU WITH MY TERROR TALE! YEP, IT'S YOUR MOVE OF THE CRYPT OF TERROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, COME AGAIN! THIS TIME I HAVE A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE YARN ABOUT THE BANGLY ART OF SELF-DEFENSE... MARQUESS OF QUENDSBERY RULED BARRIED! IT OUGHT TO RING THE BELL WITH YOU FRIENDS! I CALL IT...

KICKIN' THE GONG A ROUND!



PATTY MARRO HAS FOUGHT HIS WAY UP FROM THE SHADOWS OF THE CHICAGO TENEMENTS WHERE HE WAS BORN TO THE BIG MONEY OF PROFESSIONAL BOXING! NOW HE IS NEARING THE FINAL RUMBLE ON THE LADDER TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP.

...AND THERE'S THE BELL FOR THE SECOND ROUND, FOLKS! MARRO, THE SENSATIONAL CHICAGO MIDDLEWEIGHT, COMES OUT OF HIS CORNER.



THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, POLK! PATTY MARRS HAS DONE IT AGAIN! IF HE WINS TONIGHT, HE'LL BE CONSIDERED THE LEADING CONTENDER FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP! NOW, MARRS JUST LANDED A CRUSHING LEFT HOOK.



... WILLIAMS IS GROGGY! MARRS MOVED IN WITH A KICK TO THE MID-SECTION - A LEFT TO THE GIN, AND A SMASHING RIGHT CROSS TO THE JAW...



... WILLIAMS DOESN'T DOWNFIRE COUNT IS 4-3-2-1...

B-S. IS YOU'RE OUT?



THE CROWD IS GOING WILD, POLK! PATTY MARRS HAS DONE IT AGAIN! THEY'RE CARRYING WILLIAMS TO HIS CORNER! BOY, HE IS REALLY ON QUEER STREET! THIS IS MARRS' FIFTEENTH WIN! HE'S HAD NO LOSSES! IT'S HIS TWELFTH BY KAPOF CHAMP! YUH LISTENIN'!

THE MARRAN... BY A KNOCKOUT. IN ONE MINUTE, SIX SECONDS OF THE SECOND ROUND. PATTY MARRS!



THE SCREAMS OF THE CROWD ARE SOMEHOW CLOSED IN AS THE DOOR TO PATTY MARRS' DRESSING ROOM IS SHUT. THE VICTORIOUS FIGHTER STRETCHES OUT ON A TABLE, AND HIS TRAINER BEGINS TO WORK ON HIM.

YOU WERE GREAT TONIGHT, PATTY! GREAT! JUST WAIT TILL YOU GET IN THE RING WITH HOUSEMAN. THE CHAMP! YOU'LL MURDER HIM! MURDER HIM!



NOW THE SCENE SHIFTS! IT IS AN HOUR LATER! PATTY MARRS IS IN HIS APARTMENT, WHERE HIS WIFE AND INFANT SON WAIT FOR HIM.

I'M HOME, JUDY BECKET.

OH, PATTY! LET ME LOOK AT YOU! WHY YOU'RE NOT EVEN BRUISED!



HE DIDN'T SAY A WORD ON ME, HONEY? I PUT HIM OUT IN THE SECOND ROUND. SAYS DIDN'T YOU WATCH ME ON TELEVISION?

NO, PATTY! YOU KNOW I CAN'T STAND TO SEE YOU FIGHT! I'M SO AFRAID YOU'LL GET HURT!





WE FOLLOW THE CAR AS IT MOVES UP THE ROAD TO THE TRAINING CAMP SITE. THE TRAINING-BIRD LIES IN DARKNESS, BUT THE LIGHTS OF THE HOUSE BURN BRILLIANTLY.



C'MON!
INSIDE,
MARKO!

IT'S LIKE TO GET YOU
INSIDE THOSE ROSES
WITHOUT YOUR GUN.
GIG-SHOT!

SHUT UP!
AN' GET
MOVIN'!

FINALLY, PATTY STANDS BEFORE JAKE HOUSEMAN, THE WOODEN-BUTT CHAMP.



HERE HE IS,
BOSS!

SIT DOWN,
MARKO!

SAY YOUR PIECE,
HOUSEMAN! I'LL
STAND!

THAT WAS
A NICE FIGHT
TONIGHT,
MARKO!



LOOK, HOUSEMAN!
YOU DON'T SEND FOR
ME TO COMBAT!
BLAME ME? WHAT'S
THE PTER?

YOU'RE RIGHT, MARKO! GRAY!
I'LL GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKLES!
IT'S ABOUT YOUR NEXT FIGHT.
THE ONE YOU'RE GONNA HAVE
WITH ME! HOW MUCH DO YOU
WANT... TO LOSE? IT?



DROP
DEAD,
HOUSEMAN!

LOOK, BOY! DON'T GET
SO TOUCHY! I CAN
MAKE IT WORTH YOUR
WHOLE! SIX FIFTY
GRAND! THAT'S MORE
THAN YOU'LL MAKE BY
WINNING IT!



I'M GONN INTO THAT
RING TO KICK HOUSE-
MAN! YOU CAN'T
BUY ME! YOU CAN
TAKE YOUR DOUGH
AND...



LENNIE SEND
HIM A BOMB
OVER, BOSS!

NEVER
WIND! HE'LL
CHANGE HIS MIND!

I DON'T
THINK I WILL,
HOUSEMAN!



WE'LL SEE, SMART
BUT! YOU HAD YOUR
CHANCE TO DO BUS-
INESS! GRAY, SLAM!
GET 'EM OUT OF
HERE!

SURE, BOSS!
THROW 'EM!

HEH, HEH! NICE CLEAN SPORTSMAN, THE CHAMP. HA, BODIES? WELL, YOU AIN'T SEE *MIDNIGHT* YET! NOW, WE MOVE AHEAD TWO MONTHS TO THE DAY BEFORE THE FIGHT! PATTY IS TRAINING HARD! AT HIS CAMP!



GRAY, PATTY! THAT'LL BE ALL! GET INTO A SHOWER! YOU'RE AS READY AS YOU'LL EVER BE!



YOUR BOY LOOKS TERRIFIC, PHIL! I'M WRITING HIM UP AS THE FAVORITE!

JOEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE? WHERE'S MICKEY?



SOR, SOR. I'VE GOT TO TALK TO YOU, PATTY!

CRON IN HERE! WHAT IS IT? YOU'VE BEEN GIVING!

IT'S THE *JERRY*! HE'S BEEN KIDNAPPED! I, SOR... I FOUND THIS NOTE!



PATTY SNATCHES THE NOTE FROM HIS WIFE AND READS IT!

'MARIO, IF YOU EVER WANT TO SEE YOUR BO AGAIN, YOU'LL LOSE THAT FIGHT TOMORROW NIGHT' AND DON'T GO TO THE DOGS!

OH, PATTY! SOR! WHAT WILL WE DO?



WHAT CAN WE DO? I'VE GOT TO THROW THE FIGHT FOR MICKEY'S SAKE!

SOR, SOR... HOW, HOW COULD THEY DO THIS?



DON'T WORRY, BABY! I'LL BET *EVERY* WITH THEM IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO!

POOH MICKEY! SOR! I HOPE THEY'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM... SOR!



SO NOW IT'S THE NIGHT OF THE FIGHT! THE ARENA IS JAMMED! MANY HAVE COME. SURE OF BEING PUTTY BARRED BY THE CHAMPIONSHIP! BUT AS THE FIRST ROUND BEGINS...



I CAN'T BELIEVE IT POLICE! IS THIS THE SAME BOY WHO'S WON EVERY ONE OF HIS PROFESSIONAL FIGHTS?

I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS, HOUSEMAN!

SHUT UP! THE REF'LL HEAR YOU!

...THEN THE SECOND ROUND...

MARCO IS TAKING THE BEATING OF HIS LIFE, FANS! HOUSEMAN IS POUNDING AWAY WITH LEFTS AND RIGHTS! MARCO CAN'T EVEN DEFEND HIMSELF...



...THE THIRD ROUND...

THIS IS RIDICULOUS, POLICE! THEY OUGHT TO STOP IT! HOUSEMAN IS BEATING MARCO EVERYTHING HE'S GOT! THE YOUNG MIDDLE-WEIGHT FROM CHICAGO IS OUT ON HIS FEET...



...THE FOURTH...

MARCO'S BEEN DOWN TWICE THIS ROUND, POLICE! BUT HE KEEPS ON GETTING UP! ON-ON! HOUSEMAN HAS HIM AGAINST THE ROPES...



HOUSEMAN LANDS A RIGHT AND A LEFT... ANOTHER RIGHT! THE REFEREE IS MOVING IN!



...AND HE STOPS IT! THE REFEREE STOPS THE FIGHT AFTER TWO MINUTES, SEVEN SECONDS OF THE FOURTH ROUND! MARCO IS FALLING TO THE CANOPY! HE IS REALLY BEATEN...



SOMEbody GET THE DOCTOR!

NOW AS HE GOES HOME'S MY BOY?

THIS MAN IS DEAD!



NOW WE'RE NEAR THE END OF OUR LITTLE TALE! IT TAKES PLACE ABOUT SIX MONTHS LATER! JAKE HOUSEMAN IS IN HIS TRAINING CAMP... GETTING READY TO 'DEPEND HIS TITLE' ONCE MORE! IT IS NIGHT! THE CAMP LIES IN DARKNESS! THE TRAINING-RING IS DESERTED! A LIGHT BURNS IN THE HOUSE!



SUDDENLY THE DOOR TO THE HOUSE SWINGS OPEN! THE FOUL ODOR OF ROTTED FLESH FILLS THE ROOM! JAKE SPINS AROUND...



THE DECOMPOSING FORMS MOVED FORWARD! JAKE BACKS AWAY... THEN DASHES FOR THE DOOR...



JAKE DASHES OUT OF THE HOUSE! THE THING STUMBLES AFTER HIM! NEAR HIS CAR HE TRIPS OVER TWO CRUMPLED FORMS ON THE GROUND... THEIR FACES WASHED TO BLOODY PULPS...



SUDDENLY THE SLIMY, MAGGOT-INFESTED THING IS UPON JAKE... CHASING HIM TO THE DESERTED RING...



THE THING IS STRONG... STRONGER THAN IT EVER WAS WHEN IT WAS ALIVE! AND AT THE NIGHT GRASS ON A MAGNARE SCENE TAKES PLACE THERE... IN THAT DESERTED TRAINING CAMP! THE FETID, RANK, ROTTED CORPSE OF PATTY MARNO FIGHTS ONCE AGAIN! WITH EACH LEFT HOOK, CHUNKS OF FLESH FALL AWAY FROM ITS BLOATED FISTS! WHITENED BONES PROTRUDE FROM FRACKLES... CUTTING JAKE TO RIBBONS...



HEH...HEH! YEP! AND WHEN IT WAS OVER, RIDDIES, JAKE WAS OUT TO RIBBONS... LITERALLY! AS WELL AS FIGURATIVELY! IN FACT WHEN THEY FOUND HIM THE NEXT MORNING, THEY HAD TO SCRAPE HIM OFF THE GARNIES AND PRO WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIM INTO A CHEESEBOLD!



THE END



THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

It's been a while since my last remarks. I was given my sedatives and put in the chair for the winter.

I'm been unleashed to give my remarks on that old rot-bag **WE**. The Old Hag—er, Old Witch and you, mean nothing further!

The bad ones: "Wicked Death", "Midnight Snack!", "Tons of a Kind!", "Southern Hospitality!", "Seeds of Death!", "The Howling Banquet!" and "The Wreck!" The good: "And All Through the House!", "Beauty Rest", "Star Light, Star Bright!", "The Mass of Horror!", "Take Your Pick!", "Till Death!" and "Modern Bluebeard!"

I'll soon be doing tons of Q & W, then you, Crypt! Print my address, please!

Dear "Crypt" Hovis:

3001 Edgewood Pk.
Marion, IL 62959

Now, send the Rat of the madhouse away. —**gg**

Dear Vault-Keeper,

Enclosed is a copy of "The Music of Brith Earth" from **MASTERS OF TERROR**. Please let me know if **EC**'s Johnny Craig is in fact the artist of "T.M.E.E." Thanks.

Steve Rodia

Gilbert AZ

I was a little skeptical when I first looked at the photographs. It was as if **Craig**—the pencils got a Marvel House ink. But, if these are from the mid 70s (I think they are) then we're talking a 30-year gap between **EC** and this work, and a guy's ink is on change. The sketches, tho, is stuff like this two-panel progression:



The composition and breakdown is pure **Craig**, if I'm any judge. There are other tell-tales.

More about my boy Johnny's ink. When we asked him to recreate some **EC** art (again, 30 years after **EC**) he did so with an accuracy accuracy! What a guy!

—**gg**

Dear VK

Who is supposed to be older out of the three of you?

I own **SHOCK** 1, **PIST** 1, **W FAN** 1, **CRYPT** 12 and **VAULT** 11 and 12 and **OLD HAUNT** 2. Which one of these is the most valuable?

In order from my favorite to least favorite: "Vault-Keeper, Crypt-Keeper, Old Witch."

Matchless

Shelbyville TN

When it comes to birthdays, maybe **OW** takes the cake! And, the cake takes a slinging when the candles are lit. —**VC**

Dear Vault-Keeper

I just received your **EC** Classic (#10) of **PANIC**. I really enjoyed it, especially "The Night Before Christmas." The last panel of **Bill Gaines** and his old crew was great. I sure hope you will print more of these.

Jack Barnes

Calles TX

The **EC** Classics are marvelous. 2-issue reprints on offset stock. Write for current list and prices. —**VC**

Dear Russ,

A month ago you sent me a free comic. It was a **VAULT**. I already had this comic. I had been collecting **EC** comics for 2 years and had never missed an issue of **CRYPT**, **VAULT** or **HAUNT**. But one time I had missed a **HAUNT**. It was #12.

Can you please send it to me for FREE, because I cannot get checks or money orders. And since you sent this let me next door 3 FREE **EC** COMICS! So please send it FREE.

Mark Fiedorich

Ulrich NY

FREE! What am I, a soup kitchen? We sent you a **VAULT**, now own this, but you want a copy of *The Old Hag's rag?* What are they putting in the water in Utah? —**VC**

Dear VK

Your comic are the best. I love **VAULT** 12. I have three **VAULT** OF HORROR comics. I have one **CRYPT** and **CRIME** and one **HAUNT**. Your Zombie.

Joseph Zink

Indianapolis, IN

Dear VK

VK I loved your story "And All Through the House" in **VAULT** 4. It gave you that holiday cheer. Could you let me know what book the story "Let the Punishment Fit the Crime" is in? Thank you.

Rock-Keeley

Chicago, IL

"And All..." was in 64-pg RCP **VAULT** 4 (which reprinted **VAULT** 34—will be our **VAULT** 34). "Punishment" was in **VAULT** 25—will be our 25—and already is in RCP **VAULT** 2. Confusing and for ya?

—**VC**

To Russ Cochran & Garretson

I have been ordering from you since late 80 and I just

wanted to say thank you. Without mentioning any names (DG), but thanks to their poor handling, or rather mishandling of orders, I said I'd never order comics through the mail again. With EG being hard to find, I figured I'd try one more time rather than do without. From the get go, I have never had any problems or damaged merchandise received from your company.

Once again I just wanna say keep up the good work, and
Thank you, plus realizing my faith in education by proving
you know how to comprehend what you read unlike some
people. (197)

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1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

his names, please. The Anonymous Editor recently went thru his unindexed copies from 68-78, and was reminded of the fun SDs reprints of DC SP, DC and the other big companies traditionally focused on publishing with very little effort towards mail order.

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I was both delighted and surprised to see you appear in the show " Tales from the Cryptkeeper ". I traded my Crypt comic book for a V.A.U.L.T. I've also started a club in my classroom about comic books. It featured you as the Comic Keeper. I love your stories the best! Every story that you tell about the adventures and crimes the reader

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Of course I would strike you as the literary type, who among the literary circles borrows a book? Ma! ———

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 26

In RGP Vault art, *The Grim Fairy Tale*, which was "For How the Best Total", was a great horror-fairy tale. Did you really read the fairy tales from the DW? In the end of the story you say we have to enroll her children. I mean, does anybody want to?

Do you, GK and GW live together? If you do is there a competition for stories? Actually I like GW but some of her stories aren't good! If you print my letter could you print my address?

1. **Abstract**

[apakah itu Persepsi Persepsi](#)
[Belajar Dari 10](#)

Stealing from OW was like stealing candy from a baby—a baby on vacation! I'm surprised you can't smell her anywhere all the way to Morton, IL. —JG

[illegible]

I [am] a fan of Johnny Greg, Jack Kamen and Joe Orlando. I think they're the best artists ever, no offense to the other artists in the EC comics. I was wondering if you could write new stories, because you just do the same ones over. I mean I love your comics, don't get me wrong. 'Tillt-Kramer, it is! (sm)

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Table 1

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of a 12-week training program on the physical fitness and health-related quality of life (HRQL) of elderly people. The study was conducted in a community center in a city in the north of Iran. The study population consisted of 30 elderly people (15 men and 15 women) aged 65-75 years. The study was a randomized controlled trial. The control group received no intervention, and the intervention group received a 12-week training program. The training program consisted of aerobic, strength, and flexibility exercises. The physical fitness and HRQL were measured at baseline and after 12 weeks. The results showed that the intervention group had significantly higher physical fitness and HRQL than the control group after 12 weeks. The findings of this study suggest that a 12-week training program can improve the physical fitness and HRQL of elderly people.

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[illegible]

Issue #15 was excellent! My favorite story was "99.447166% Pure Moment." I have seen an EC author for four years, and I have three stories about an EC story I liked more, except maybe Ray Bradbury's "The Master of the 54-page!" Along with VerilogEC's Sandman by Neil Gaiman, the entire EC line continues to be my favorite read. They take readers away from big adventures, minor-sized weapons, etc. I have one question for you, Dave. Are you from Iowa, KS, OR, & SD combined?

ended to give you all the info. Until the CA makes the C&A, make sure you're covered. Blessed Screens

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Category:


Catch "The Handler" in CRYPT 10, yet to come, or in 84-pg ROP CRYPT 8. It's an old witch tale, but I can't resist a look-out to Broadway! When I review the Ohsaumatic retirement plan, with my look I am (overcast) —

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The best part of "A Bloody Undertaking" was Johnny Craig's artwork. I knew halfway through that Wilma was the vampire. Charlie was too obviously a fed herring. But like I said, I enjoyed the artwork. A tip of the coffin to Jo Jo Jimmy Craig. (By the way, usually, Craig is rendering of you looks more like INTRODUCING a Good Kisser.)

A much better story was "With All The Trappings" Besides being more original, the somewhat unusual setting and a spooky atmosphere to the proceedings. Quality's creamy, whimsical was a definite bonus.

"Impressed By A Nightmare" had an appropriately gruesome, blackly comical (and intended) ending. Ode to "The Death Wagon!" The first device of creatures from the circus, except their screams, was caused by the mother

|  Internal Revenue Service Department of the Treasury | | Statement of Earnings, Expenses, and Other Information For the Year Ended 12/31/2011 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Part I General Information 1. Name of the organization: ABC COMPANY 2. EIN: 12-3456789 3. Principal office address: 123 Main St, City, State 12345 4. Mailing address: 456 Elm St, City, State 12345 5. Telephone: (123) 456-7890 6. Website: www.abc.com 7. Form type: 990 8. Preparer's name: John Doe 9. Preparer's EIN: 987-6543210 10. Preparer's address: 789 Oak St, City, State 12345 11. Preparer's phone: (123) 456-7890 12. Preparer's fax: (123) 456-7890 13. Preparer's email: john.doe@abc.com 14. Preparer's signature: John Doe 15. Preparer's title: Preparer 16. Preparer's date: 12/31/2011 17. Preparer's SSN: 123-45-6789 18. Preparer's signature: John Doe 19. Preparer's title: Preparer 20. Preparer's date: 12/31/2011 21. Preparer's SSN: 123-45-6789 22. Preparer's signature: John Doe 23. Preparer's title: Preparer 24. Preparer's date: 12/31/2011 25. Preparer's SSN: 123-45-6789 26. Preparer's signature: John Doe 27. Preparer's title: Preparer 28. Preparer's date: 12/31/2011 29. 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Preparer's date: 12/31/2011 149. Preparer's SSN: 123-45-6789 150. Preparer's signature: John Doe 151. Preparer's title: Preparer | | | | | | | | | | | |

of revenge! The name of that car should beed the "Devastat!"

It just occurred to me that if you were Polish you would be a Pole-Vault-Keeper!

Barry McCollum Alton, IL

Hey! No more Vaultish jokes! —VK

Dear VK,

I just want to compliment you on your comic book. I enjoy reading it very much. I like all the stories in no. 13 and am looking forward to reading the next issue. Have plans to order one of your 1-stella real soon. Keep up the good work. A fish.

B. Shapers address unknown

"People who live in Brass Hennes" was EXCELLENT! I have the original VAULT #1. At the end of "Brass Hennes" was the kind of govt. I like. Your comics are great. I have CRYPY #13, #20, and Vol 1 and #12. I have VAULT #10, #9 (the original #4) and #1. I also have HAUNT Vol 1 and 2 and the original #3. And I have CRASH #12.

I recently saw DEMON KNIGHT and it was cool! I saw it even though I'm 5'10 and it's rated R. I've got it on tape, and I've got the soundtrack and the board game of "Tales from the Crypt." You can print my address.

James France 118 Karen Lynn Cir
Farming Hills, MS 38930

"Heerases" was in 84-pg Glad Vault 3; remember, those 84-pagers were reprints, too. The original originals were published in the early 80s. —VK

Dear Russ,

Hi, you don't know me but my name is Jared. I've only got 2 of your magazines, one is CRYPY 5, another one is HAUNT 5 and VAULT 5. The Vault Keeper is my favorite. I am 12 years old. Russ, do you think you could send me a letter from the Vault Keeper and a poster of him, please, thank you.

I got these magazines for helping my mom's friend move. I'm going to send for another magazine when or if I get money. I've been waiting up to buy one. I've only got 4 dollars.

I really like the story "Sick-Hole" by the Vault-Keeper
Jared Gillett West Valley City, UT

Hard-earned money spent wisely! —VK

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I think it's wonderful that you're reprinting the 1950s EC comics. I own about 5 or 6 of your comics and 24 EC comics in all. It's hard for me to obtain all of the ECs. I'd like to, so I'll be subscribing to all of the sci-fi titles and your comic VAULT.

I really hope that you don't discontinue the reprinting of the EC comics, though it's likely you will soon as the establishment of the comics code banned the reprinting and distribution of ECs.

I love your comments at the end of each story, they're so much better than "The CW is a CR!" With puns and straight-up roasts.

Christian Golden Millwood, VA

Strictly speaking, the Code made EC's sometimes excessive attention too much trouble to fight for (as ineffective way to censor, huh?). Since we don't have a similar threat, it'd be just pure economics that might get us someday. Keep buying! —VK

Dear Mrs.

Yus (it is) I another time! I only write for give you thanks. Many times I've written to American editors but it's never the attention that you've [sent]

I write you to order subscriptions comic-books, information — and you answer me (a strange really!) I know that I don't know English very well, but with the help of a dictionary I think that you've understood me. Thank you.

One month ago I discovered in Barcelona a book-shop (and comic store) named Sigameen where I can get the old EC comics. Hence that I've [purchased] you a lot of treasures, but it's finished. Some days ago I wrote you a letter to ask you if I can subscribe with you; yes, well, I don't know if you answered me but I've changed direction. It isn't important, now I can get CRYPY and HAUNT in Barcelona.

Well, already I've [said] all I have for saying. Excuse me another time, for I don't know English very well. Thank you for all.

Marc Gine i Coria Barcelona, SPAIN

I love the way my foreign readers are able to express themselves in English—and, it makes my job easier, my Spanish is wonderful! Thanks, another time! —VK

NEXT ISSUE

THE NEWCOMER HAS "WISHED THE BOAT" ALL RIGHT! FOR WHILE THEY FISHED AND SHOWED OVER THEIR INSUFFICIENT, WILDER DEER AND COMFORTABLY RELAXING IN HER POSTHOLE! THE APARTMENT, INSIDER SLEAZEBAG, WAS COMBOMBED BY ITS TOTAL ABSENCE OF ANSWERS?



Also available this month are WEIRD SCIENCE and TWO-PISTED TALES. Watch for VAULT COMIX and the new addition to the EC reprint line, FRONTLINE COMIX, next month. Don't forget CRYPY, WEIRD SCIENCE and HAUNT. Get more of your local comic book shop or Suburban (see our ad in this issue for details).

BACK ISSUES: CRYPY #1, \$1 each. FRONT #1 & 2, \$1 each; all others up to now issue #6, \$1 50 each. Issues #7 and up, \$2 each. Don't forget the series "11-SECOND RUN OF WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/SCIENCE FICTION PICTURES! Add \$1 per order (\$10 outside US) for SHIP.

We want letters! Write to:
VAULT
SBN157040
P.O. Box
WEST PLAIN, MO 64075

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
VAULT OF HORROR "128" (#14, JUNE 1982)
COVER by Johnny Craig

"Sawyer" Johnny Craig
"Lucky" (The Song A Round)" Jack Davis
"Prodigious Fate" Jack Kamen
"Collector Completed!" Graham Ingels

We warrant letters of interest! The reprinting of pulp magazines, pulp is a unique genre. We are not just reprinting and selling the pulp magazines, we are reprinting and selling the pulp magazines. We are not just reprinting and selling the pulp magazines, we are reprinting and selling the pulp magazines. We are not just reprinting and selling the pulp magazines, we are reprinting and selling the pulp magazines.

Here's A Ghostly Easter Yarn!
You Bunnies Should 'ear This...

PRACTICAL YOLIK!



"YOUR NAME IS FREDERICK HAMILTON? YOU ARE A WEALTHY SPORTSMAN AND WORLD-TRAVELER? SIX MONTHS AGO YOU LEFT THE UNITED STATES FOR THE BELGIAN COAST ON A HUNTING EXPEDITION? NOW YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY HOME? AND YOU'RE BRINGING SOMEONE BACK..."

"YOU'LL LIKE AMERICA, D'YUNA? AND YOU'LL LIKE LOUISE, TOO?"

"LOUISE, MISSA NAMATIN? LO-LOU?"

"LOUISE IS MY FIANCÉE, D'YUNA... MY SOLE-FRIEND? WE'RE GOING TO BE MARRIED RIGHT AFTER EASTER! THAT'S WHY I'M BRINGING YOU BACK WITH ME! YOU'LL BE OUR HOUSE-BOY, SERVANT, SAFFY?"

"I SAFFY MISSA NAMATIN? I BE YOUR NUMBER-ONE MAN... TAKE CARE EVERY THING! THAT RIGHT?"



THAT'S RIGHT, STUANA! LORD, IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE SEEN LOUISE! FROM NOW ON, I'M NEVER GOING TO LET HER OUT OF MY SIGHT!



YOU LOVE MISSY LU-KEE, MISSA HARRATH?

DRAFTY ABOUT HER! AND SHE LOVES ME! WE WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER!



THAT'S GOOD, MISSA HARRATH! I'M HAPPY THAT YOU MY FRIEND!

AND YOU'RE MY FRIEND, STUANA! I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO REPAY YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE IN THE VAST COUNTRY WHEN THAT RAINBO ATACKED!

I TAKE CARE OF YOU, MISSA HARRATH! THAT MY JOB!



YES, DEAR READER! YOU'RE FREDERICK HARRINGTON AND YOU OWE YOUR LIFE TO THE SIMPLE AFRICAN NATIVE! WHY, BRINGING HIM TO AMERICA IS THE LEAST YOU CAN DO TO SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE! AND NOW THE BOAT THAT CARRIES YOU IS DOCKING, AND YOU'RE COMING DOWN THE GANGPLANE.



YOU'RE LIKE A JOB WHEN YOU GET LOUISE! AND JUST LIKE AN AFRICAN KID, YOU TRIP GOING DOWN THE GANGPLANE! BUT THE BIG AFRICAN'S HANDS ARE AROUND YOU, AND HE STOPS YOU FROM FALLING.



YOU ALMOST FELL, MISSA! YOU WATCH CAREFUL NEXT TIME!

THANKS, STUANA!

WHO, WHO'S FREE? FREED?

LOUISE! THIS IS MY SAFARI LEADER! THE BEST GUNNER ON THE WHOLE AFRICAN CONTINENT! I'VE BROUGHT HIM BACK WITH ME TO BE OUR SERPANT! HIS NAME IS STUANA!



HOW DO YOU DO, STUANA?

I, GLAD YOU DO, MISSY LU-KEE!

YOU PASS THROUGH CUSTOMS AND HAS A CAB! STUANA SITS BEHIND YOU WHILE LOUISE CHATTERS ABOUT THE WEDDING.

AND THE HARRINGTONS WILL BE THERE, AND THE UNIONS, AND ARE FARRAUGH! YOU'RE NOT LISTENING!

OF COURSE NOT, MONEY! ALL I WANT TO DO IS LOOK AT YOU!



NOW, YOU'RE AT THE APARTMENT? YOU UNLOCK THE DOOR AND SWING IT OPEN? YOU STEP ASIDE AND LOUISE ENTERS? BUT...STUNNA BELLS.

COME IN, STUNNA?
WHAT'S BEFORE?

WELL, IT LOUISE!
I THINK I KNOW!
GO AHEAD,
STUNNA!

THANK YOU MUCH,
MISSA HAMILTON!



YOU'VE WATCHED THE RITUAL MANY TIMES BEFORE, BUT STILL IT FASCINATES YOU.

WHAT'S HE
DOING,
FREDERICK?

OH-W-WHWH!
I'LL TELL
YOU LATER!

FOOMBAH! FOOM-
BAH! MOHANA!
MOHANA...MOHANA...
FOOMBAH...



THE NATIVE WRITHES AS HE UTTERS HIS STRANGE INCANTATIONS? SOON IT IS OVER! HE STEPS INSIDE.

WELL, TARD WHAT
WAS ALL THAT?

IT'S A TRIBAL RITUAL,
LOUISE! STUNNA'S A MEMBER
OF A BLACK MAGIC GUILD!
THEY CANNOT ENTER A
STRANGE NEW DWELLING
PLACE WITHOUT FIRST
PERFORMING THAT RITUAL!



HOW EXCITING! BLACK
MAGIC? WHAT ELSE
DOES HE DO?

I WOULDN'T ASK
HIM IF I WERE
YOU, LOUISE!
THESE NATIVES
DON'T TALK
ABOUT IT!

MISSA
HAMILTON?
MISSA
HAMILTON?



STUNNA STANDS AT THE WINDOW, STARING OUT AT THE BUILDINGS IN THE GATHERING TWILIGHT.

SOMETHING TO
SEE, EH, STUNNA?
THOSE ARE THE
GYPSYSHIPS
I TOLD YOU ABOUT!

WE...
WE NO
FALL?

NO, STUNNA! WE WON'T
FALL! THIS HUT IS
MADE STRONG...

THIS HUT NEEDS
A GOOD GOSSIPING.
MR. HAMILTON!



OH! STARTING TO **AGE** ALREADY... AND WE'RE NOT EVEN MARRIED!

WHERE'RE THE DUST-CLOTHES?

OH, NO YOU DON'T! **HOOH!** NOT GONNA START **DISCARDING** ME? I HAVEN'T KEEN YOU IN **SIX MONTHS!** BUT DOWN! I JUST WANT TO **LOOK** AT YOU!

STOP IT, FREDER! YOU'LL BE SEEING **ENOUGH** OF ME FROM NOW ON! COME ON! WHERE ARE THE DUST-CLOTHES?

AFTER LOUISE LEAVES, **B'UNA** LOOKS AT YOU QUESTIONINGLY...

WHAT'S WRONG, **B'UNA**?

MISSA **HAMATH!** YOU **SEEM** MISSY LU-EEZ... SHE LOVE YOU?

OF COURSE **B'UNA!** SHE **WENT** ISN'T SHE BEAUTIFUL? **PRETTY,** I COULD **LOOK** AT HER ALL DAY! MISSA **HAMATH!**

LATER THAT NIGHT, LOUISE COMES BACK! SHE CARRIES A **PACKAGE!** YOU'RE PLEASED, UNTIL YOU FIND OUT THAT IT'S NOT FOR YOU!

UH-UH! **THIS** IS FOR **B'UNA!**

WELL! THAT'S A **FINE** HOW-DO-YOU-DO?

FOR ME, MISSY LU-EEZ?

Y-O WATER AS THE **NATIVE** STUBBLED WITH THE **PACKAGE,** TRYING TO **UNWRAP** IT! FINALLY HE GRABS FORTH A **BAILY** DECORATED **OVAL** FORM...

WELL, I'LL BE... I HAVEN'T SEEN ONE OF **THOSE** THINGS IN YEARS! A **SOBING** EASTER-EGG?

Y-ES, MISSA **HAMATH!** I EAT?

OH, NO, **B'UNA!** YOU **LOOK** IN IT? SEE THE **LITTLE** **WINDOW?** **LOOK** **INSIDE!** WHAT DO YOU SEE?

OH, OH, **M'GUM!** **LITTLE** **WINDO!** **LITTLE** **HARE** WITH **THAT** **EGG!** **Pretty** **COLORS** **INSIDE!**





IT'S THE EASTER
BUNNY! HEHEHE!
HE TESTS BART
THREE TIMES
BUNNY...

I THOUGHT
BUNNY WOULD
LIVE IT.
PRESENT!
LO-EEZ!



YOU WATCH BUNNY AS HE SLIDES
FROM THE ROOM, CLUTCHING HIS
NEW GIFT! THEN LOUISE SPEAKS
TO YOU...

I WANTED TO TALK
TO YOU ABOUT MY
MODELING JOB.
HONEY? I DON'T
WANT ME TO GO
AFTER WE'RE MARRIED!

J/E CAN
SO FLY
A KITE!



YOU DON'T KNOW THAT BUNNY
CAN HEAR EVERY WORD THAT IS
SPOKEN BETWEEN LOUISE AND
YOU...

IT'S GOING TO
LEAVE HIM
WITHOUT A
BOND SIZE
JE. PREZ!

I REALLY DON'T
CARE, HONEY!
AFTER WE'RE
MARRIED, HONEY!
LOOKS AT YOU
BUT ME!



YOU DON'T KNOW THAT AN AFRICAN NATIVE'S SENSE
OF HUMOR IS RATHER LIMITED.

OH I SEE! AND I
SUPPOSE ALL YOU'RE
GOING TO DO IS SIT
AND LOOK AT ME.
AFTER WE'RE MARRIED!

UH-HUH! THAT'S
ALL! JUST SIT
AND LOOK!



ESPECIALLY WHEN HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HUMOR...

THEN I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER
NOT MARRY HIM? THAT
SOUNDS RATHER DULL!

OH, HONEY! YOU
WOULDN'T THROW ME
OVERBOARD, WOULD
YOU?



...AND YOU DON'T KNOW THAT HE NEVER HEARS
THE LAST OF THE CONVERSATION BECAUSE HE
LEAVES IN A HURRY.

NOT IN YOUR LIFE.
DEAREST! I'D MARRY
YOU EVEN IF IT MEANT
THERE IS LAUNDRY!

C'MERE, BABY!



OF COURSE, YOU'RE SURPRISED WHEN HE'S NOT AROUND
TO ANSWER YOUR CALL AFTER LOUISE LEAVES.

BUNNY? BUNNY? NOW,
WHERE IS BUNNY? COULD
HE HAVE SOME?

YOU NEVER HEAR LOUISE'S MUFFLED CRY AS A BLACK SHADOW SPRINGS UPON HER FROM THE DARKENED HALLWAY.

WHO... HMMMMH?



AND YOU'RE TOO BUSY WORRYING ABOUT B'JUNE'S WHEREABOUTS TO HEAR THE WEIRD INCANTATIONS THAT SEND AND RE-SEND IN THE APARTMENT-HOUSE CELLAR...

DRAFT FOOL! HE'LL GET LOST... SURE! HE DOESN'T KNOW HIS WAY AROUND AT ALL!



SO YOU'RE RELIEVED WHEN THE NATIVE REENTERS THE APARTMENT CLOTHING HIS NEW SCENIC EASTER-EGG...

I'D WISH YOU HAD HE WARNED! HE WAS IN BLAZES... WHERE WERE YOU?

I TAKE CARE OF YOU, MISSA HMMMM!



I TAKE CARE OF ME? NOW?

YOU WANT TO LOOK AT MISSY LO-EEZ ALL DAY LONG? SHE NO WANT! SHE NO HARRY YOU! I FEE!



HMM! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? OUT THAT!

HOW YOU LOOK AT MISSY LO-EEZ ALL DAY LONG? SHE NO THROW OVER-BOARD! HERE?



HE HANDS YOU THE SCENIC EASTER-EGG, AND A COLD SHIVER OF TERROR RUMS UP YOUR SPINE! EVEN BEFORE YOU LIFT THE BARELY-COLORED ONE TO YOUR EYE AND PEER INTO THE WINDOW, YOU KNOW! AND YOU'RE RIGHT! LOUISE IS INSIDE! BY SOME FANTASTIC AFRICAN BLACK MAGIC, B'JUNE HAS SWALLOWER LOUISE AND PLACED HER IN THE EGG! SHE SITS IN THE ARTIFICIAL GRASS, SMILING AT YOU... AND YOU SCREAM

YAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

HOW YOU LOOK ALL BAK. ALL YOU WANT. MISSA HMMMM!



WEN, WEN! NOW THERE'S A DEAL! EASTER-EGG! LIKE B'JUNE'S WOULD SELL THE LITTLE TELESCOPE BUSINESS FAST! WITH BILLS LIKE LOUISE INSIDE. BROTHER! ONLY THE NEXT IF YOU LIKE ANOTHER DEAL... OUR OLD MAGE ARE AVAILABLE! HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WHAT I AND MY FELLOW GNOLLNATICA, THE GRIFF-KEEPER AND THE OLD WITCH, HAVE PRINTED IN OUR PERVERSED PERIODICAL?

SO FAR IT'S GOOD READING! IF THIS MAGAZINE ISN'T GETTING TO YOUR NEWS-stand, SUBSCRIBE! THE INFORMATION FOR OTHERS PEOPLE IS IN MY COLUMN, THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S COMMENT! NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE OLD WITCH!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEET SMELL IT? YEA, IT'S MY GROSSY CAULDRON! I'VE LIT THE FIRE UNDER IT AND I'VE BOILED UP ANOTHER EASY TERROR-FIGHT! JUST FOR YOU! SO COME SIT BESIDE YOUR HOSTESS IN THE MOUNT OF FEAR... THE OLD WITCH... AND I'LL FEED YOU A TREAT IN WHICH THE MONSTER MOUNTS IN LEAPS AND BOUNDS AS IT REARS ITS SPINE-TINGLING FINISH! I CALL THIS GRAY-PUMPKIN...

COLLECTION COMPLETED!



ARITA FOLLOWED LOVE FOR APPROX. WAS NOT ABNORMAL! SHE AND HER HUSBAND JONAH HAD BEEN MARRIED FOR SIXTEEN YEARS! THEY HAD HAD NO CHILDREN! THUS, AS MIDDLE AGE CAME UPON ARITA SHE HAD TURNED HER FRUSTRATED MATERNAL INSTINCTS TOWARD ANY STRAY DOG, CAT, OR BIRD THAT CROSSING HER PATH...

POOR THING! YOU LOOK SO OLD AND HUNGRY! YOU STAY RIGHT HERE AND I'LL GET YOU A CUP OF WARM MILK!



JONAH TELMAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, DISPOSED ANIMALS! TO HIM, THEY WERE PESTS...PARASITES THAT LEECHED UPON HUMAN BEINGS FOR FOOD AND SHELTER WITHOUT GIVING ANYTHING IN RETURN.

ANITA! WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU DOING?

THIS POOR LITTLE KITTEN WAS CURLED UP ON OUR DOOR-STEP, JONAH! I THOUGHT

NEVER MIND WHAT YOU THOUGHT! SEND THE MISERABLE THING ON ITS WAY!

BUT IT'S COLD AND HUNGRY!!

IF YOU FEED IT, IT'LL HANG AROUND HERE FOR GOOD! I WON'T HAVE IT! SCAT! GO ON! SCAT!

STOP IT, JONAH! STOP IT! HERE, KITTEN, KITTEN! COME TO MAMA!

ANITA PICKED THE KITTEN UP WHEN HE SAW AND CARESSED ITS FURRY TREMBLING FORM! JONAH BLAMED ALL IT.

LOOK AT IT, JONAH! IT'S FRIGHTENED! I'M GOING TO TAKE CARE OF IT! EVER SINCE THE CANARY DIED.

FIRST IT WAS GOLD-FISH! THEN A CANARY! NOW A CAT!

PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE HORSES! IT KEEPS THEM INTERESTED, KEEPS THEM FROM BEING BORING! ANIMALS ARE MY HORRY! I LOVE THEM! YOU SHOULD HAVE A HORSE, TOO!

IS THAT SO? I SHOULD HAVE A HORSE, EH? ALL RIGHT! I WILL START A HORSE! YOU'LL SEE!

THE NEXT DAY, ANITA LOOKED UP FROM FEEDING 'MOM-MOM' THE NAME SHE'D GIVEN THE CAT TO SEE JONAH COME INTO THE HOUSE AND START DOWN THE CELLAR LOADED WITH PACKAGES.

WHY JONAH! WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THERE?

YOU WANTED ME TO START A HORSE, DON'T YOU? OAH! I'M STARTING ONE!

JONAH STAMPEDED DOWN THE CELLAR STEPS WITH HIS BUNDLES! HE BEGAN TO UNWRAP THEM AND LIME HIS WORK-TABLE WITH THEIR CONTENTS! KNIVES, AND OTHER STRANGE IMPLEMENTS! SHOOLS OF WINE! JARS OF JELLY AND OTHER WEIRD LIQUIDS! ANITA STARED AT THE ARRAY OF MATERIAL HE'D PURCHASED.

YOU YOU MUST HAVE SPENT AN APPLE LOT OF MONEY ON THESE! THESE THINGS, JONAH!

SO WHAT? YOU DON'T CARE WHEN YOU SPEND MONEY TO FEED YOUR PETS? WHAT ABOUT THAT BIRD-BATH YOU BOUGHT - ?





...AND THE BREAD YOU WASTE FEEDING THEM? AND THE CANNY CAME! YOU BOYT! IT'S JUST JAB IN A GLORET NOW.

...THAT'S BECAUSE YOU WON'T LET ME BUY ANOTHER CANNY!



AND THE SAND AND CHARDAL AND SAND-SEED YOU HAD TO BUY FOR IT? AND THE MILE 8 FOR THAT DIRT BARRY CAT?!

...THIS CAT IS NOT DIRT'S RATHER IT TODAY!



...NOT TO MENTION THE COUNTLESS STRAY MUTTS YOU'VE FEED! WHAT ABOUT ALL OF THEM?

JONAH... YOU DON'T REALLY HAVE ANIMALS AS MUCH AS THAT DO YOU?



I DESERVE THEM! BUT NOW I'VE GOT A HONEY? A HONEY I'LL LOVE! YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS, ANITA? CAN YOU GUESST? CAN YOU?

I... I HAVEN'T ANY IDEA! WHAT?



DANGER! I'M GOING TO STUFF ANIMALS! YOU HEAR? STUFF THEM!

WO'NOT YOU GOSLON? IT'S CRAZY! ANIMALS ARE LIVING THINGS! THEY SHOULD BE GIVEN DECENT BURIALS! STUFFING THEM IS NO, NO BARBARIC!



YOU KNOW THAT MOUSE HE HEAR AT NIGHT... RUNNING THROUGH THE WALLS?

THE POOR LITTLE THING! I LEAVE A LITTLE SNEEDS FOR IT TO MISSLE ON!



THAT'S GOING TO BE MY FIRST SPECIMEN! SET A TRAP! THIS WILL CATCH HIM WITHOUT SQUASHING HIM!

JONAH! HOW COULD YOU? HOW COULD YOU BE SO SPITEFUL? YOU'RE JUDGING THIS BECAUSE YOU KNOW I LOVE ANIMALS... AREN'T YOU? YOU'RE DOING THIS TO HURT ME!

HEE, HEE! THIS ANITA'S A REAL BRIGHT BRAGGAD. KIDNEY? SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE HIT ON THE HEAD WITH A BRICK, DOES SHE? SO JORAH'S GONNA START STUFFING ANIMALS! WELL, ANYWAY, IT'S A FOLLOLO- AND AMBITION...HEE, HEE! NOW TO GET ON WITH OUR STORY! THAT EVENING, JORAH AND ANITA SAT IN SILENCE.

ANITA PLAYED WITH HER BITTER WHILE JORAH READ HIS BOOK ON TAXIDERM! LISTER TO THIS, ANITA! 'BUT THE MAMMAL TO BE STUFFED FROM A POINT BETWEEN THE FRONT LEGS TO THE REAR! FROM THE SKIN DOWN EACH SIDE OF THE BODY, CUTTING AWAY THE FLESH CLOSE TO THE SKIN! THEN

STOP! O, JORAH! STOP! IT? LISTER! THE TAIL IS REMOVED IN ONE PIECE BY PULLING IT FROM THE SKIN!



THE NEXT DAY, WHILE ANITA FINISHED BREAKFAST, JORAH WENT DOWN INTO THE CELLAR! WHEN HE CAME UP, HE CARRIED THE TRAP! A SQUEALING MOUSE WAS CAUGHT INSIDE.

LOOK, ANITA! SUCCESS! I'VE CAUGHT OUR MOUSE!

BEEP! NO! OH, OH, NO!

I'M GOING TO WRITE NOW, ANITA! WHEN I COME HOME, I'M GOING TO STUFF HIM! YOU, YOU! BETTER NOT LET HIM GO IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!

YOU, YOU'VE NOT GONNA TO LEAVE HIM IN THERE ALL DAY, ARE YOU? YOU CAN'T DO IT! IT'S HEART-LESS!

HEL, HEL! BUT JORAH DID LEAVE THE MOUSE IN THE TRAP ALL DAY! ANITA HAD TO TAKE HER KITTEN AND RUN OUT OF THE HOUSE BECAUSE SHE COULDN'T STAND THE POOR THING'S HOWLING! THAT NIGHT, WHEN JORAH CAME HOME FROM WORK, HE WENT DIRECTLY TO THE CELLAR...



AFTER A WHILE, JORAH CAME UP! HE HELD A BOARD IN HIS HAND! THE MOUSE HAD BEEN TACKED TO IT.

LOOK, ANITA! NOW I HAVE TO DRY IT AND FRY IT! THEN...



JORAH MADE LIFE MISERABLE FOR ANITA IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED.

LOOK, ANITA! I'VE WINED UP THE SKELETON! SEE?

SO AWAY! SO AWAY FROM ME!



FINALLY, THE MOUSE WAS STUFFED!

FINISHED? ANITA, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I HATE YOU! HATE YOU!



JORAH STARTED ON ANOTHER SPECIMEN! HE CAUGHT A BLUE-JAY IN AN INDIAN-TRAP.

LOOK, ANITA! CAUGHT IN TODAY! IT'S A JAY-BIRD! WHAT A BEAUTY!

LET HIM GO, PLEASE, JORAH! PLEASE!



HE LIVED A SQUIRREL, WITH A NUT.

CHEER, YUM LI!

JORAH! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE!



HE WOULD COME HOME AT NIGHT WITH CANNERS AND THERE WOULD BE SCRATCHING INSIDE THEM A PEECH! CAUGHT IT IN THE PAINT!

JORAH, DON'T HAVE FIFTY ON THEM AND ME!



AND JORAH'S COLLECTION GREW! ONE DAY...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT DOG, JORAH?

DON'T HAVE A DOLLAR ON IT! IT'S A STRAY! IT'S FOURTH BUILDING UP A COLLECTION WHEN YOU LIVE IN THE CITY.



MEE, NEE! I'LL SAY IT'S TOUGH
FINDING ANIMALS IN A CITY! BUT
JOHNN DID ALL RIGHT! HIS COL-
LECTION GREW AS FAST AS ANITA'S
HATRED FOR HIM! SOON HE HAD
ONE MOUSE, ONE RAT, ONE BLUE-
JAY, ONE ROBIN, ONE SPARROW,
TWO PIGEONS, ONE SQUIRREL,
AND ONE DOG!

WAY WON'T YOU COME
LOOK AT MY COLLECTION.
ANITA? WHY? DON'T
YOU LIKE ANIMALS
ANYMORE?

OF
COURSE
I LIKE
ANIMALS.
LIVE
ANIMALS?

I'VE GOT ALMOST A
COMPLETE COLLEC-
TION, ANITA! COME
SEE!

NOT! NOT!
I HATE YOU!
LEAVE ME
ALONE!
LEAVE
ME
ALONE!

ONE DAY

HEW, MEW-MEW! HEW, KITTY, KITTY!
OH DEAR, WHERE ARE YOU?

ANITA SEARCHED THE HOUSE WITH ANGER FOR HER
PET CAT! FINALLY SHE STOPPED BEFORE THE CELLAR
DOOR.

JOHANN, HE... HE WOULDN'T? HE
WOULDN'T DARE! **NOT MEW-
MEW!**

JOHANN WAS DOWN THERE! ANITA COULD HEAR HIM
PUTTERING! SHE OPENED THE CELLAR DOOR SLOWLY!
SHE HADN'T BEEN DOWN THERE SINCE JOHANN
STARTED ON HIS HORRIBLE HENRY.

MY CAT? DID YOU
SEE MY CAT?

COME DOWN, ANITA! COME ALL
THE WAY DOWN! SEE MY
COLLECTION!

JOHANN DID, DID
YOU SEE MEW-MEW?

MUR-MUR?

JONAH STOOD THERE SMILING AT AMITA! HE POINTED TO THE ARRAY OF STUFFED ANIMALS...THE MOUSE, THE RAT, THE ASSORTED BIRDS...

THE BUNNEL, THE DOG, AND...

SEE?

...IT SAT ON ITS HINDQUARTERS...GRINNING AT AMITA! IT LOOKED ALMOST ALIVE...

IT...IT COMPLETED MY COLLECTION, AMITA!

JONAH! YOU..YOU KILLED MY CAT!



AMITA'S EYES BULGED! HER FACE FLUSHED CRIMSON! THE GLIMMERING KNIFE ON JONAH'S WORN-TABLE SPARKLED UNDER THE OVERHEAD LIGHT.

SEE? NOW I HAVE A COMPLETE COLLECTION! ALL OF THE ANIMALS FOUND IN THE CITY! ALL STUFFED!

NOT ALL...JONAH! YOU FORGOT ONE TYPE OF ANIMAL...



AMITA SNATCHED THE KNIFE FROM THE TABLE! JONAH'S MOUTH FELL OPEN! HE STARED IN HORROR AT HIS DETERMINED WIFE...

AMITA? P-P-PUT DOWN THAT KNIFE! YOU...YOU COULDN'T...

COULDN'T I, JONAH? COULDN'T I...?

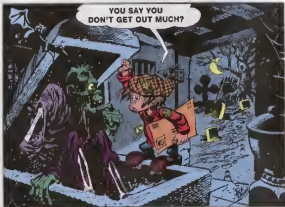


I'M NOT SURE! I THINK IT WAS A NEIGHBOR WHO FIRST FOUND THEM! AMITA WAS SITTING ON THE CELLAR FLOOR, GAMBLING INOCCURENTLY! SHE HELD THE STUFFED FORM OF NEW-MEN IN HER ARMS, STROKING IT GENTLY! JONAH STOOD ABOVE THEM! AMITA'S JOB HAD BEEN A STUFFO! ONE! HERE AND THERE, THE STITCHES SHOWED! THE GLASS EYES DIDN'T SET EXACTLY RIGHT! TO A PROFESSIONAL TAXIDERMIST, IT MAY HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED A POOR JOB! TO JONAH, IT DIDN'T MATTER! FOR JONAH HAD BEEN STUFFED AND MOUNTED.

HEE, HEE! YEP, AMITA COMPLETED JONAH'S COLLECTION FOR HIM...BY MAKING HIS PART OF IT! AMITA MAY HAVE NEEDED A BIT STUFFY TO JONAH AT TIMES...BUT IN THE END IT WAS HE WHO WAS THE STUFFED-SHIRT! JONAH JUST GOT UNDER AMITA'S SKIN ONE TOO OFTEN...HEE, HEE...SO SHE FINALLY GOT UNDER HIS! LEFT HIM A STITCHES TOO! BY THE WAY! ANYBODY INTERESTED IN A MOUNTED HUMAN FIGURE...HEE, HEE...THERE'S A STATUE OF GENERAL JACKSON IN THE PARK! WELL, THAT'S ENOUGH MORNING AROUND! 'BYE, NOW!



YOU SAY YOU
DON'T GET OUT MUCH?



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GLAD CRYPT #1



GLAD CRYPT #2



GLAD CRYPT #3



GLAD CRYPT #4



GLAD CRYPT #5



GLAD CRYPT #6



GLAD VAULT #1



GLAD VAULT #2



GLAD VAULT #3



GLAD VAULT #4



GLAD VAULT #5



GLAD VAULT #6



GLAD WEIRD #1



GLAD WEIRD #2



GLAD WEIRD #3



GLAD WEIRD #4



GLAD HAUNT #1



GLAD HAUNT #2

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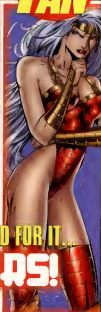
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NO. 26
AUG-SEPT.



REPRINT
EDITION

THE VAULT OF HORROR

FEATURING



THE WICKED



THE OLD



THE GRIPPER



THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! WELCOME ONCE AGAIN TO THE VAULT OF HORROR, MY FRIENDS! IT SEEMS LIKE SUCH A LONG TIME SINCE WE LAST MET, SO JUST PULL UP A PILE OF CHAIRS, HEADS AND SIT DOWN! DON'T BE ALARMED ABOUT ALL THE SHADOWS YOU SEE FLOATING NEAR THE CEILING... HERE IN THE VAULT WE LIKE TO KEEP OUR SPIRITS UP! HEH, HEH, HEH! NOW LET'S BEGIN OUR SPOOKY TALE CALLED...

TWO OF A KIND!



PIER 33... THE HUGE OCEAN LINER SAT SILENTLY IN THE DOGGY BARNNESS OF THE WATERFRONT, SOLIDLY OVERLOOKING A GROUP OF NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPHERS Huddled IN THE SHADOWS OF THE PIER

CONFUSED IF
SHE CAN'T STAY
ABOARD FOR—
EVER? IT'S
TEN P.M. NOW!

WE'VE BEEN
WAITING ALL DAY.
I GUESS WE CAN
WAIT A BIT
MORE!



THE NEWSMEN WERE PATIENTLY WAITING FOR WILLOW DREE, THE FAMOUS, CAMERA-SHY STAGE ACTRESS...

STRANGE THAT SHE TURNED DOWN SO MANY HOLLYWOOD OFFERS!

NOT SO STRANGE... THEY USE CAMERAS IN HOLLYWOOD!



YET WILLOW DREE WAS *POSSIBLY* TO PHOTOGRAPHERS! TOO MANY OF THEM HAD THEIR CAMERAS DASHED FOR ATTEMPTING TO TAKE HER PICTURE!

THERE'S NOT A *SCRAWL* PROOF OF HER EXISTENCE! THE GUY THAT *DOES* GET HER PICTURE IS IN FOR A *NICE* BONUS!

HEAR! I GUESS AL BOLTON OF THE COURIER CAME CLOSEST! REMEMBER?



AL BOLTON HAD SPOKE TO GET A PICTURE OF WILLOW DREE, AND AFTER TRAILING HER FOR DAYS, FINALLY CLICKED THE SHUTTER...

TRIUMPHANTLY, HE HAD RETURNED TO HIS EDITOR, BUT WHEN THE NEGATIVES WERE DEVELOPED...

FOR GRAMBLESS IDIOTS WHO DO YOU THINK YOU'RE HIDING? YOU GOT A PICTURE OF HER SUMMER HOME... BUT THAT'S ALL!



YEAH, I REMEMBER! POOR AL WASN'T THE SAME AFTER THAT HE GAVE UP PHOTOGRAPHY, DIDN'T HE?

SURE DID! BAK'ERE COMES BYION OF THE NEWS!



ANYTHING NEW ON WHEN WILLOW DREE IS GOING TO LEAVE THE SHIP?

I JUST TALKED TO THE SHIP'S PURSER! SHE'S PUT ONE OVER ON US AGAIN! SHE DEPARTED ABOUT THREE HOURS AGO... CLIMBED DOWN A ROPE LADDER INTO A SMALL BOAT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SHIP!



THE NEWSMEN HAD 'MISSED THE BOAT' ALL RIGHT! FOR WHILE THEY FUNDED AND BROILED OVER THEIR MISFORTUNE, WILLOW DREE WAS COMFORTABLY RELAXING IN HER PENTHOUSE! THE APARTMENT, THOUGH LUXURIOUS, WAS CONSPICUOUS BY ITS TOTAL ABSENCE OF MIRRORS!



A FEW NIGHTS LATER, SEVERAL MEN CALLED ON WILLOW.

I'VE READ THE PLAY, GENTLEMEN, AND I'M WILLING TO ACCEPT THE LEADING ROLE UNDER MY USUAL TERMS?

OH, NO! YOU MEAN...



EXACTLY! THERE ARE TO BE NO MATINEE PERFORMANCES! ONE SHOW A DAY... AND THAT WILL BE IN THE EVENING!



(HIGH!) AND I SUGGEST YOU WANT TO REHEARSE ONLY IN THE EVENING. IS THAT?

YES! OTHERWISE, I WILL NOT TAKE THE ROLE! IS IT AGREED?

(GASP!) AGREED?



THIS, AND HER RELUCTANCE TO BE PERSUADED, WAS WHY COLUMNISTS AND SHOW PEOPLE CALLED HER TEMPERMENTAL! SOME EVENINGS LATER SHE WAS INTRODUCED TO HER CO-STAR, BRADLEY PHILLIPS...

I'VE BEEN WANTING TO MEET YOU FOR A GREAT MANY YEARS, MISS DARE!

PLEASE CALL ME 'WILLOW'! I'M HAPPY TO MEET YOU TOO... BRAD? I THINK WE'LL BE GOOD FRIENDS!



IN THE WEEKS OF REHEARSALS THAT FOLLOWED, BRAD AND WILLOW BECAME MORE THAN GOOD FRIENDS.

I'VE NEVER PLAYED OPPOSITE A LOVELIER WOMAN THAN YOU, WILLOW! WILL YOU HAVE DINNER WITH ME TONIGHT?

OH, BRAD, I'D LOVE TO... BUT AT MY APARTMENT!



WHEN THEY BEGAN SEEING EACH OTHER STEADILY, THE THEATRE AND NEWSPAPER WORLDS WERE HOPEFUL THAT AT LAST PERHAPS THERE WOULD BE A CHANGE IN HER...

MAYBE SHE'LL BREAK DOWN AND LET HER PICTURE BE TAKEN!

IF THEY GET MARRIED, MAYBE SHE'LL BE A LITTLE MORE COOPERATIVE!



WILLOW, THE SHOW'S ALL SET TO OPEN NEXT WEEK, AND WE'VE BEEN WORKING HARD! LET'S TAKE THE WEEKENDS OFF AND GO SOMEWHERE TOGETHER!

OH, BRAD! HOW WONDERFUL! I'VE BEEN DYING TO TAKE A REST!



JANE'S WHY SHE SO REACHLY ACCEPTED BRAC'S IDEA OF THE WEEKEND VACATION? OVER THOUGH SHE LIKES HIM VERY MUCH, SHE WANTS TO GET HIM ALONE SO SHE CAN *FEAST!* HEH! HEH! *BUT THAT'S ONLY HALF OF IT!* YOU SEE, BRAC SUGGESTED THE IDEA FOR THE *VERY SAME REASON!* DURING AN *OLD* MARRIAGE, HEH! HEH! HEH!

LOOK AT THAT MOON! ISN'T IT HEARTFUL?

YES! IT... IT DOES SOMETHING TO YOU, DOESN'T IT?

...I'D LIKE THAT...

IT WAS NO EASY JOURNEY! THEY FLOODED ON, STEP AFTER STEP... AND BRAD FOUND HIS THOUGHTS OF WILLOW GIVING HIM TROUBLE...



I'M A FIDEL TO WANT TO KILL HER! I COULD HAVE PICKED ANOTHER VICTIM! SHE'S SUCH A SWEET GIRL! I... I LIKE HER SO MUCH!

AND WILLOW SHE WAS HAVING DIFFICULTIES WITH HER HEART, JUST AS BRAD WAS...



HE'S BEEN SO WONDERFUL! I DON'T KNOW WHAT EVER MADE ME THINK I WANTED TO KILL HIM! I... I THINK I'M FALLING IN LOVE WITH HIM!

AND THEN, SUDDENLY, WITHOUT ANY WARNING, A FADING, BLINDING SNOWSTORM SWOOPED DOWN ON THEM...



WILLOW! HOLD MY HAND TIGHTLY! WE'VE GOT TO KEEP CLOSE TOGETHER!

BRAD! I'M FRIGHTENED!

FOR SEVERAL HOURS THEY STRUGGLED THROUGH THE BUZZARD, STUMBLING AND FALLING AGAIN AND AGAIN IN THE DEEP BANKS OF SNOW... TRYING DESPERATELY TO REACH THE CABIN AND SAFETY...



ISABETH THERE, WILLOW! THERE'S THE CABIN! I CAN... ISABETH I CAN SEE IT!

ANOTHER HALF HOUR PASSED BEFORE THEY FINALLY ENTERED THE CABIN AND THREW THEMSELVES ON THE BUNKS... EXHAUSTED! IT WAS ALMOST DAWN...



THEY SLEPT SOUNDLY UNTIL EARLY EVENING! WILLOW AWOK TO FIND BRAD DOZING OVER HER, AN ANXIOUS EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE...



BRAD! FOR... FOR A MOMENT YOU STARTLED ME!

I... I COULDN'T HEAR YOU BREATHING! FOR... FOR YOU LOOKED DEAD! BUT I CAN SEE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! I... I WAS SO WORRIED...



BRAD...

DARLING...



THERE WAS NOTHING TO DO BUT WAIT... AND HOPE THAT SOMEONE WOULD REALIZE WHERE THEY WERE AND FORM A RESCUE PARTY...



THE NIGHTS PASSES...

LORD, I'M HUNGRY! I'M GETTING STOMACH CRAMPS! BUT I WON'T TOUCH WILLOW! I'D RATHER THAN HARM HER!



... AND ANOTHER NIGHT PASSES...

IT'S ONE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE'S BLOOD RIGHT NOW! MY BODY CRAVES IT SO MUCH! IF ONLY SOMEONE ELSE WERE WITH ME INSTEAD OF BRAD! I'LL NEVER HURT HIM!



... AND ANOTHER NIGHT...



THEY'VE GOT TO RESCUE US SOON! I... I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS! I WANT! WHY... WHY DON'T THEY COME DO US OUT?



BUT THE FOLLOWING EVENING...

BRAD, I'M... I'M TOO WEAK TO STAND! I... WHAT... WHAT HAPPENED... YOUR ARM?

I HAD A LITTLE ACCIDENT! FELL DOWN! JUST... JUST A SPRAIN! DON'T WORRY, HONEY!



BUT YOU, WILLOW? YOU LOOK SO ASH! YOUR BETTER STAY IN BED!

YOU... YOU'RE RIGHT! I DO FEEL WEAK! PERHAPS I SHOULD BE IN BED!



I'LL BE IN THE NEXT ROOM, BETTER! JUST CALL IF YOU WANT ME! I... I LOVE YOU, WILLOW.

LOVE... YOU, BRAD!



BRAD RETURNED TO HIS ROOM AND SLUMPED ON THE EDGE OF HIS BED, TRYING DESPERATELY TO SURVIVE THE OVERWHELMING URGE THAT WAS CONSUMING HIM!



THE NEXT NIGHT BRAD AWOKE FROM HIS SLEEP AND HURRIED TO WILLOW'S SIDE...

WILLOW... WILLOW, ARE YOU HAWKEY?



WILLOW STARED HEAVILY UP AT HIM...

BRAD... YOU... (GASP!) YOU'RE HURT! GOOD LORD, WHAT... (GASP!) WHAT... HAD HAPPENED?



BRAD LOOKED AWAY, TRYING TO AVOID HER QUESTIONING EYES...

OH... JEE... NOTHING, HONEY! DON'T WORRY! IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO TO MAKE YOU COMFORTABLE?

N-NO, BRAD! I'LL BE ALL RIGHT!



A WEEK PASSED? WILLOW REMAINED IN HER BED, GROWING STEADILY PALER AND WEAKER? THEN, THE TONS OF SNOW LYING ON THE ROOF BEGAVE TOO MUCH OF A STRAIN ON THE SMALL CABIN'S STRUCTURE...



HEARING THE THUNDEROUS ROAR AND WILLOW'S BETRAYED SCREAM OF AGONY FROM THE NEXT ROOM, BRAD LUNGED FROM HIS BED AND DASHED HIMSELF TO HER BEDSIDE...



WITH AN EAR SPLITTING CRACK, THE ROOF SPLINTERED AND COLLAPSED DIRECTLY ABOVE WILLOW? A HUGE, STAKE-LIKE FRAGMENT HURTLED DOWN...



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, A RESCUE PARTY ARRIVED AND REMOVED THE DRIFT OF SNOW FROM THE DOOR? THEY STEPPED INSIDE...



THE RESCUERS STARED IN HORRIFIED FASCINATION AT THE SPINE-CHILLING SIGHT THEIR EYES BEHELD? THE WOMAN LAY IN HER BED, A WOODEN STAKE PROTRUDING UPRIGHT FROM HER CHEST, HER FLESH AS DEADLY WHITE AS THE SNOW SURROUNDING HER. THE MAN, ON WHOM SHE WAS LEFT OF HIM, WAS SPRAWLED UNCONSCIOUSLY ON THE FLOOR, HIS HAND GRASPING HER IN A DEAD-GRIP FOR FUEL IN ORDER TO SPARE EACH OTHER. WILLOW HAD DRAINED HER OWN BLOOD... AND BRAD HAD EATEN MOST OF HIS OWN FLESH...



HEH, HEH! WASN'T THAT A PATHETIC LOVE AFFAIR? WILLOW WAS A DUCKER FOR BRAD... AND BRAD ATE HIMSELF UP ALIVE OVER WILLOW? A REALLY SELF-SACRIFICING COUPLE, WOULDN'T YOU SAY? YOU KNOW THAT OLD EXPRESSION... 'THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE...?' HEH, HEH! WELL, NOW IT'S TIME TO GO ON TO THAT SICKENING GIFT-KEEPER? DON'T BE FOOBLED... I'LL SEE YOU LATER IN THE BOOK!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

THANK YOU! FOR EIGHT PAGES OF SNEER... STARE... NOTHING! IF THAT'S A HORROR STORY, I'LL EAT MY COFFIN! WHY, I'LL BET YOU COULDN'T MAKE A MADE NATIVE OF NEW GUINEA SHIVER AT THE NORTH POLE WITH THAT TANK! MEN, HEY! TEP! IT'S ME, FRIENDS! THE CRYPT-KEEPER... READY TO REALLY COME ACROSS WITH THE SHOOTER! SO CREEP INTO THE CRYPT, GRAB YOUR SHOOL, AN' LET'S DANCE! DON'T MATTER IF YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE IT! I'LL KEEP YOU HOPPIN' WITH THE TERROR-FALL 'T I CALL.

GRAFT IN CONCRETE!



GEOFFREY HORNBY, PRESIDENT OF THE HORNBY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY AND MEMBER OF THE TOWN COUNCIL, PULPED NERVOUSLY ON HIS CHAIR AS HE FACED THE FLOOR OF THE LIBRARY IN MAYOR JOHN APPLIGATE'S LUXURIOUS MANSION! FINALLY THE DOOR OF THE LIBRARY OPENED AND THE MAYOR APPEARED.

"WELL, HORNBY! I'M SORRY I KEPT YOU WAITING, BUT I'M GIVING A DINNOR PARTY! WHAT CAN BE SO IMPORTANT THAT WOULDN'T WAIT FOR THE DOWNGRADE MEETING TOMORROW MORNING?"

"I'LL BE AS BRIEF AS I CAN, MAYOR, ABOUT TOMORROW'S MEETING THAT I'VE COME





YOU MEAN THE ROAD CONTRACT, DON'T YOU, HORNSEY?

EXACTLY, MAYOR! I WANT THAT CONTRACT!



IT'S NOT UP TO ME, HORNSEY! THE ROPE OF THE COUNCIL WILL DECIDE WHO GETS THE JOB!

YOU CAN SWING IT IF YOU WANT TO, MAYOR!



I MIGHT! BUT I'M NOT GOING TO! I KNOW FOUR PLANS YOU WANT THE ROAD TO RUN THROUGH THAT PARCEL OF LAND YOU OWN SOUTH OF TOWN!

AND I WANT MY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY TO GET THE CONTRACT, TOO!



I'M SORRY, HORNSEY! I WILL NOT BE A PART OF ANY DIRTY DEALS INVOLVING THE TOWN'S MONEY!

I THINK YOU WILL, MAYOR! AFTER ALL! THIS IS NOTHING NEW TO YOU!



YOU'D BETTER EXPLAIN YOURSELF, HORNSEY! I DON'T LIKE WHAT YOU'RE IMPLYING!

I'M TALKING ABOUT THE NEW SCHOOL THEY'RE PUTTING UP. APPROPRIATE I KNOW ALL ABOUT THE BACKBACK YOU'RE GETTING ON THE FENCE THE TOWN PAID FOR THE LAND!



WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, HORNSEY?

I'M TALKING ABOUT THIS AGREEMENT! HERE'S A PHOTOGRAPHIC COPY! LOOK FAMILIAR, MAYOR? WHAT IF THE REST OF THE COUNCIL SAW THIS?



THE... THIS IS BLAZE-MAIL, HORNSEY!

COME NOW, MAYOR APPROPRIATE! LET'S JUST SAY THAT WE'VE COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING! TOMORROW, AT THE COUNCIL MEETING, YOU'LL SEE THAT I GET THE ROAD CONTRACT... AND OVER MY PROPOSED ROUTE... EH?

HEH, HEH! 'WELL, NOOSES?' IT'S JUST LIKE THAT SAY! 'ALL'S FAIR...IN LOVE AND POLITICS!' SO GOSFREY NORRISST LAID HIS CARDS ON THE TABLE AND NATCH APPELDATE COULDN'T TOP 'EM! THE NEXT DAY, AT THE COUNCIL MEETING—



NOW, JUST ONE MINUTE, MAJOR APPELDATE! IF, AS YOU SAY, WE DO GRANT THIS CONTRACT TO OUR FELLOW COUNCIL MEMBER, MR. NORRISST, AM I TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE ROAD WILL THEN FOLLOW HIS PROPOSED ROUTE?



THE CONTRACT WOULD MEAN THAT, MR. WILLIAMS?

BUT ISN'T IT RATHER OBVIOUS THAT THE ROUTE IS LAID OUT SO AS TO INCLUDE HIS OWN PROPERTY HOLDINGS?



MR. WILLIAMS? I SEEM TO RECALL A SIMILAR SITUATION LAST YEAR...WHEN THE COUNCIL WAS VOTING ON A NEW PLAY-GROUND FOR THE PARK.

LOOK HERE, WATCH APPELDATE! I DON'T SEE NOW THAT HAS ANY BEARING ON THE PRESENT CASE!



PERHAPS THE REST OF THE COUNCIL WOULD LIKE TO HEAR WHERE THE EQUIPMENT FOR THE PLAYGROUND CAME FROM, MR. WILLIAMS?

HEH...COUGH! I...ER... SEE HOW THAT THE ROUTE IS THE BEST... AND THAT IT IS ONLY BY SHEER COINCIDENCE THAT IT PASSES MR. NORRISST'S PROPERTY! I'LL CAST MY VOTE...AYE!



THANK YOU, MR. WILLIAMS! ANY OTHER OBJECTIONS?

WHAT ABOUT THE CEMETERY, NORRISST? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT THAT?

CEMETERY? CEMETERY? WHY GRASSMOOM? WHAT CEMETERY, MR. BARLOW? CEMETERY, MR. NORRISST? THE ONE I AM THE PRESIDENT OF! YOUR ROUTE WILL HAVE TO PASS THROUGH IT!



NORRISST? YOU DON'T MENTION THIS!

MY ROUTE DOESN'T PASS THROUGH GRASSMOOM, MR. BARLOW!

IT DOES NOW, NORRISST? BUT WHAT HEALHER! THAT IS...IF YOU WANT ME TO VOTE 'AYE'!







HEH, HEH! YES, YOU CLEVER LITTLE FIENDS! MR. BARLOW'S SCHEME IS JUST THAT! WHY GO TO THE TROUBLE OF DUGGING UP THIRTY-TWO GRAVES AND TRANSFERRING THE COFFINS TO A DIFFERENT PART OF GRAMMOCK CEMETERY, WHEN SO MUCH MONEY COULD BE SAVED BY JUST RELOCATING THE MONUMENTS! AFTER ALL! WHO'S GONNA KNOW THE COMPLEX? HEH... HEH...



ALL RIGHT, BARLOW! THAT'S A DEAL! BUT YOU'D BETTER MAKE THAT FIVE HUNDRED!

FIVE HUNDRED? IS PRETTY STEEP, HORNSEY!



ONE OF MY FULL-DIGGERS COULD SLIP... BARLOW!

GRAY! GRAY! FIVE HUNDRED!



AND SO, THE TOWN ROAD NEARED COMPLETION! IT WOUND THROUGH GRAMMOCK CEMETERY AND ON THROUGH HORNSEY'S OWN PROPERTY! ONE NIGHT...

MR. WILLIAMS! AND TO WHAT DO I OWE THE HONOR OF THIS VISIT?

FORGET THE SLACK, HORNSEY! I'M HERE FOR MY SHUT OF THIS PIE! EITHER THAT... OR I TALK!



YOU'RE FORGETTING MAYOR APPLEGATE'S INFORMATION ON THAT PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT CONTRACT, AREN'T YOU, WILLIAMS?

I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES, HORNSEY! IF I GO DOWN, I'LL BRING YOU WITH ME!



SO THAT'S HOW YOU FEEL, EH?

THAT'S HOW I FEEL, HORNSEY! SHALL WE MAKE IT... SAY... TWO THOUSAND?



ALL RIGHT, WILLIAMS! TWO THOUSAND! BUT NOT ONE CENT MORE!

I KNEW WE'D SEE THINGS EYE TO EYE, HORNSEY! HERE'S MY PEN...

ONE NIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF AUGUST, A BLACK LIMOUSINE PURRLED ALONG THE RECENTLY COMPLETED NEW TOWN ROAD...

YOU'LL CLEAR THIS **ROADBLOCK** AWAY BEFORE I CUT THE TAPE TOMORROW OR, HORNBY?

DON'T YOU WORRY, MARCH APPELDATE! THAT **STEAM ROLLER** IS GOING TO BE ROLLED UP FIRST THREE TOMORROW MORNING!



GOOFY HORNBY SAT BEHIND THE WHEEL! MARCH APPELDATE WAS AT HIS SIDE? MR. WILLIAMS AND MR. BARLOW LOUNGED IN THE COMFORTABLE REAR SEAT...

CERTAINLY IS A SMOOTH ROAD, MR. HORNBY!

THIS IS THE PART THAT RUNS THROUGH GRASSHOGG, MR. BARLOW. I WAS **ESPECIALLY** CAREFUL ABOUT TWO AREA... HEH, HEH!



SUDDENLY THE CAR'S HEADLIGHTS FELL UPON SOMETHING IN THE ROAD AHEAD...



IT STUCK UP OUT OF THE NEW BLACK TAP, CLAWING AT THE HOT NIGHT AIR... A ROTTED, WOODEN, NAILBOT-COVERED HAND...



THE BLACK LIMOUSINE SWERVED CRAZILY TO AVOID HITTING THE SLIMY THING... CARCERED ACROSS THE ROAD...AND...



FOR A MOMENT AFTER THE SPLINTERING CRASH, THERE WAS **THICK SILENCE!** THEN...



SUDDENLY, THE AUGUST NIGHT WAS FILLED WITH A RUMBLING! THE ROAD BEGAN TO GRACE AND GRUMBLE!



SLOWLY, THEY BEGAN TO EMERGE FROM BENEATH THE NEWLY COMPLETED HIGHWAY! THEY TOTTERED AND STUMBLERD, MOVING AWAYWARD...



LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

I CAN'T OPEN THE DOOR!
IT'S JAMMED!

THE PUTRID GORR OF THIRTY-TWO DECAYING CORPSES BURNED THE TRAPPED COUNCILMEN'S ROUSTERS...



OH, LORD! HELP US!

WE'RE TRAPPED! AND THEY'RE COMING...

EEEEAAAAA!

THE NEXT MORNING, THE WRECKED LIMOUSINE WAS DISCOVERED AT THE ROADSIDE! BUT THERE WAS NO ONE INSIDE...



THAT'S FUNNY!

IT'S MR. ROBINSON'S CAR!

WONDER IF HE'S HURT? HE AIN'T SHOWED UP AT THE OPENING CEREMONY! IN FACT... NONE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL HAS...

THE ROAD AROUND THE CAR WAS SMOOTHLY PAVED NEARBY, THE STEAMROLLER RESTED...



WELL! LET'S GET THAT STEAMROLLER... AND THIS WRECK... OUT OF HERE!

YEAH! THE TOWNFOLK'LL BE DRIVEN THROUGH... SOON AS THE MAYOR CUTS THE TAPE!

THE BAND AIN'T GONNA CUT THE TAPE, JES' O' MORE!

NO! THE MAYOR WON'T CUT ANY TAPE! NOR WILL THE REST OF THE COUNCIL BE PRESENT AT THE ROAD'S OPENING CEREMONY! FOR MAYOR APRILFOOTE, MR. BARLOW, MR. WILLIAMS, AND MR. MORRISBY HAVE BEEN FLATTENED BY THE STEAMROLLER AND NEARLY INCEP INTO THE ROAD'S FRESH NEW PAVEMENT...



HELP!

SHORE!

GOOD LORD!

HEH, HEH! WELL, THE OCCUPANTS OF GRAMMOR'S VIOLATED BRAKES CERTAINLY TOOK SOME CONCRETE STEPS TOWARD REVENGE. EH, RIDDERS? I HAVE THE END TO MY LITTLE TERROR-TALE NIGHT FALL FLAT! AS FOR THOSE FOUR COUNCILMEN... WELL, I WOULDN'T FEEL SORRY FOR THEM IF I WERE YOU! AFTER ALL, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THEY'VE BEEN ON THE LEVEL IN YEARS! NOW,



I'LL RETURN YOU TO THE HAUL-KEEPER! NOT PLEASANT... SCREAMS?





JOKER!

The crowd was hushed and apprehensive as Jacques Canigot climbed the steps to the Guillotine. The mob gathered on the cobblestones below leaned breathlessly forward, as if at a signal, slowly the condemned man turned and grinned down at them. Slowly he winked, as if at an uproarious jest.

"Even at his own execution," a fat man in a leather apron wheezed to his neighbor, "he is able to smile and maintain his reputation as Jacques the Joker!"

"He is laughing at Paris... at US!" his tall companion rasped. "These fools come to admire his brazen courage, completely ignoring the fact that 20 innocent people have died at his hands! The sooner the Guillotine blade cuts off his devilish head, the safer we'll all be!"

"He's a devil, all right!" the fat man agreed grudgingly. "But such wit! Imagine... an original and highly humorous verse pinned to each of his victims! He may be the deadliest killer to ever walk the streets of France, but who can deny that he deserves to be called the JOKER?"

The Chief Jailer stood slightly below the platform, his eyes never leaving the face of the man who was about to die. What kind of depraved monster can he be? he thought to himself. Life... death... everything is a source of mirth to him! Even his last request was totally different from those I usually receive the eve of execution! A fine toast... a visit from a

close friend... **THOSE** are invariably the last desire. But not for Monsieur Canigot... **HE** asks for a bottle of purple ink and a pen! But I knew too much about his penchant for ironic humor not to see through his stunt. He poisons himself by swallowing the ink... or stabs himself with the pen... and the Guillotine is cheated. And he has made his last and most sensational joke!

Despite the revulsion he felt over the man's ghastly deeds, the Chief Jailer marveled at the eerie smile tugging at the corners of Canigot's mouth. Even now he is probably waiting for the poison to take effect, the Jailer thought. But his last joke will never be staged, because I had enough presence of mind to substitute a harmless vegetable dye for the ink... and a rubber-nibbed point for the pen he wanted!

The high scarf which the prisoner wore tightly wrapped around his throat deeply angered the Executioner. Even at this moment, the officer thought, this jester thinks perhaps he will escape by hiding inside the scarf some hard object which will blunt the blade when it falls. A last big joke, he hopes!

The Executioner forced Canigot to his knees, placed the man's head up to the hollowed-out place directly below the poised blade far overhead. Then, suddenly, the officer yanked the scarf loose, exposing Monsieur Canigot's bare throat. Nothing clattered to the platform, to the Executioner's dismay. His eyes widened and he stared in disbelief at his victim's neck. A succession of crude dashes completely circled the condemned man's throat. And, below the line of purple dots, were two carefully lettered words: **PLEASE CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE!** **THANK YOU... THE JOKER!**

**THIS STORY DOESN'T QUITE
MAKE IT! IT'S ONLY...**

**HALF-WAY
HORRIBLE!**



**YOUR NAME IS JACOBARY BOKER! YOU'RE AN
UNDERTAKER! YOU'RE STANDING BEFORE THE APART-
MENT DOOR, DIALING ITS NUMBER WITH THE PHONE
CALL REQUEST YOU'D RECEIVED HALF AN HOUR AGO!
THE VOICE ON THE OTHER END HAD SOUNDED SHARL-
TEARFULLY! YOU'D KNOWN THAT IT'D MEANT ONLY ONE
THING! ANSWERED! NOW YOU'RE KNOCKING... AND THE
SAME VOICE IS ASKING...**

**IT'S THE UNDERTAKER
THAT YOU CALLED!**

**WHO... WHO
IS IT?**



**ON, YES! COME IN! QUICKLY!
BUT... DON'T TURN
ON THE LIGHT!**

E-E-YES-SIR!



YOU SWING OPEN THE DOOR? THE LIGHT FROM THE HALLWAY KNIVES INTO THE PITCH-BLACK APARTMENT! YOU STEP INSIDE...HESITANTLY? A HEAVY OOR OF INCENSE HANGS IN THE AIR...



I DON'T WANT YOU TO SEE ME? LISTEN TO MY STORY? THEN...IF YOU STILL WANT THE JOB...

THE LIGHT BEAMS IN FROM THE HALL ILLUMINATES A CHAIR? YOU SHUT THE DOOR...AND AS THE DARKNESS CLOSES IN, YOU STUMBLE TOWARD IT? YOU SIT DOWN AS THE NOISY VOICE CONTINUES...



PLEASE TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT, SIR? I'M VERY BUSY THESE DAYS!

THE SWEET, PUNGENT INCENSE OOR STICKERS YOU? BUT NOW YOUR EYES ARE BECOMING ACCUSTOMED TO THE DARKNESS, ZACHARY? YOU CAN MAKE OUT THE FORM OF THE OWNER OF THE VOICE...LYING ON A CARRIED IN THE GLOOM...



LET ME BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING, MR. BORN? I WILL NOT TELL YOU MY NAME, AS I'D RATHER NOT DISCLOSE MY IDENTITY? AFTER YOU HEAR MY STORY, YOU MAY REFUSE TO ACCEPT MY OFFER...

"IT BEGAN OVER TWO YEARS AGO? I'D BEEN HAVING HEADACHES... INDIGESTION...PERIODS OF ELATION AND DEPRESSION? IT'S GONE TO SEE A DOCTOR, I WENT..."



I'M SORRY, MR.—? I CAN FIND NOTHING WRONG WITH YOU...PHYSICALLY?



YOU EMPHASIZE THE WORD PHYSICAL, DOCTOR? DO YOU IMPLY...

THERE ARE MANY DISTURBANCES THAT ARE NOT PHYSICAL IN NATURE, MR.—? THAT'S CAUSE LIES WITH THE PATIENT'S MENTAL CONDITION!



ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT I'M...

I SUGGEST, MR.—, THAT YOU VISIT A COMPETENT PSYCHIATRIST? HE MAY BE ABLE TO HELP YOU!

YOU'RE UNCOMFORTABLE NOW, ZACHARY, AREN'T YOU? THE STRANGER LYING IN THE DARKNESS IS ADMITTING SOME FRIGHTENING FACTS ABOUT HIMSELF? YOU'D LIKE TO GET UP AND LEAVE, WOULDN'T YOU? BUT YOU'RE AFRAID...



AT FIRST I WAS HESITANT? BUT LATER ON, I DID SEE A PSYCHIATRIST...

"I SPENT MANY HOURS WITH HIM, TELLING HIM ABOUT MYSELF! HE LISTENED... TAKING NOTES! ONE DAY HE ANNOUNCED...

ME — I ACCORDING TO ALL THE THINGS YOU'VE TOLD ME, I AM FORCED TO COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM A MILD FORM OF *DEMENTIA PRACOR... ER... SCHIZOPHRENIA!* YOUR PERIODS OF ELATION AND DEPRESSION BOMFY A *SPLIT-PERSONALITY!*

IS... IS IT *BAMBER-* *OUR* DOCTOR?

FREDAPT CAN DO A *GREAT* DEAL FOR YOU, MR. — I YOU MUST PUT YOURSELF IN *MY HANDS!*

YES, DOCTOR!



"SO I BEGAN VISITING MY PSYCHIATRIST REGULARLY! BUT, MEANWHILE, THESE SPELLS I'D BOTH EXPERIENCING BECAME MORE FREQUENT! I'D WAKE FROM SOUND SLEEPS WITH STRANGE DESIRES..."

"DURING THESE SPELLS, I'D VISIT PLACES I'D NEVER DREAMED OF GOING DURING MY NORMAL PERIODS..."

"AT FIRST THERE WAS NO HARM IN WHAT I WAS DOING! BUT SOON THE THRILLS I'D SEEK DURING THESE SPELLS BECAME MORE PERVERSE..."

WHAT'S A GUY LIKE YOU DOING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS, HANDSOME? YOU LOOK LIKE A GENTLEMAN!

JUST OUT FOR A GOOD TIME, BABY!

THIS IS A STICK-UP, MISTER! PUT UP YOUR HANDS!

O... DON'T SHOOT! PLEASE!

NOT TO... TO OUT? GOT TO... MAKE FUN!



"THE POINT IS... I DIDN'T NEED THE MONEY! I WAS WELL OFF, WAS A GOOD INCOME! WHAT I WAS DOING WAS PURELY EVIL FOR EVIL'S SAKE! I WAS LIKE TWO DIFFERENT PEOPLE! IN MY NORMAL PERIODS, I WAS MORAL, DECENT, RESPECTABLE..."

"BUT IN THESE SPELLS, WHEN MY *DARKER* SIDE... MY EVIL SIDE... TOOK OVER, I WAS BLACK, DIRTY, THE WORST TYPE OF PERSON..."

YOU SUICIDE, MR. — ?

TAKE A LETTER, MISS JONES! TO A.D. BENTON CO! BENT, LEMENT AS OF...

PLEASE... DON'T PLEASE DON'T... SOB... HIT ME AGAIN! PLEASE!

NEXT TIME... GASP... I'LL KILL YOU!



MEANWHILE, MY PSYCHIATRIST WAS DOING HIS BEST! I TOLD HIM ABOUT EACH OF THESE SCENTIES WHO EVIL IT EXPERIENCED...

YOU MUST REFUSE TO BRING IN TO THESE TIDAL WAVES THAT SWEEP OVER YOU!

I CAN'T, DOCTOR! I'VE TRIED... BUT I JUST CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF!



THINGS GOT WORSE! EACH TIME MY OTHER PERSONALITY TOOK OVER, I SUNK LOWER AND LOWER! ONCE, I Woke UP IN A FILTHY CELLAR! I DIDN'T KNOW HOW I'GOTTEN THERE... WHAT HAD HAPPENED? MY CLOTHES WERE TORN AND DIRTY, AND I SMELLED FROM ALCOHOL AND CHEAP PERFUME! MY HEAD FELT LIKE...

COCKROACH! I'VE GOT... A LUMP BACK THERE! I... I MUST HAVE BEEN SILVERED AND... AND MY KIDNEY'S SORRY!



THESE FITS OF EVIL CAME MORE AND MORE OFTEN AS TIME WENT ON! THEY EVEN BEGAN TO HAPPEN DURING THE DAY... IN THE OFFICE...

WHAT IS IT, HELD? WHAT HAPPENED IS THERE?

SON, SON! HE RIPPED... SON... FOR ME? I... I... SON... SON! HE HIT'S HOUSE! I... I NEVER WANT TO SEE HIM AGAIN!



AND THEN IT HAPPENED! I'D GONE TO VISIT MY PSYCHIATRIST AT OUR USUAL APPOINTMENT TIME! NO ONE WAS IN THE WAITING ROOM WHEN I CAME IN! HE DIDN'T EVEN LOOK UP!

WELL... GOOD AFTERNOON, MR. —? COME IN! NOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?

I... I... FEEL FINE, DOCTOR! JUST FINE!



I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED! ALL I KNOW IS THE NEXT THING I CAN RECALL IS STANDING OVER HIS MUTILATED BODY...

GOOD LORD!

I RAN FROM HIS OFFICE FEELING LOATHSOME AND DEBESLED WITH MYSELF! THIS TIME I'D DONE TOO FAR! I KNEW, IF THEY CAUGHT UP WITH ME, IT'D END UP IN A MENTAL INSTITUTION!

GOT TO GET OUT OF THE COUNTRY!



THAT NIGHT, I HOPPED A PLANE TO NAUFI!

I'LL STAY THERE TILL THIS THING BLOWS OVER!



IT WAS WHILE I WAS IN HAITI THAT I LEARNED ABOUT HOODOO.

SIMPLE, CHURCH THESE NATIVE DEVILS FASHION A DOLL IN THE FORM OF SOMEONE THEY HATE! THEY MAKE SOME HORROR-JUMBO, STICK A FEW PINS IN THE DOLL... AND POOF! THE GUY THEY HATE IS DEAD!

INCREDIBLE!

"SO I WENT TO SEE AN OLD HOODOO WITCH, DOCTOR. I TRIED TO EXPLAIN WHAT I WANTED."

HALF OF ME IS EVIL! HALF IS GOOD! I WANT YOU TO DESTROY THE EVIL HALF!

NO! NO CAN DO!

I'LL PAY! I'LL PAY ANYTHING YOU ASK! ANYTHING!

YOU PAY TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS!



ANYTHING! I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS!

I TELL YOU SIT DOWN! YOU WAIT!



"THE OLD HOODOO NATIVE BEGAN TO MOLD A SMALL SPORESQUE DOLL FROM MADS OF CLAY HE'D FEN FROM A BOILING POT! THEN HE TOOK CUTTINGS FROM MY HAIR... BITS OF MY SKIN... AND IMMRESSED THEM IN MY URINE! HE HELD IT UP FOR ME TO SEE..."

THIS... YOUR?

MY DEGREE, IT LOOKS LIKE ME!



"NEXT, THE OLD MAN TOOK SOME BLACK SOO FROM A POT AND PAINTED ONE HALF OF THE DOLL BLACK! THE OTHER HALF, HE PAINTED PURE WHITE..."

BLACK IS EVIL! WHITE IS GOOD!

I... I SEE!



SUDDENLY THE OLD MAN PICKED UP A LONG NEEDLE AND JABBED IT INTO THE BLACK HALF OF THE HOODOO DOLL! HE CRIED AT ME... AN HORROR, TOOTHLESS GRIN...

FIVE HUNDRED DOLLAR, PLEASE! I DESTROY MY EVIL HALF!



YOU START FROM YOUR SEAT,
ZACHARY! BOXER! THE FORM ON
THE DAYBED IS SITTING UP...



THAT'S MY STORY,
MR. BOXER! NOW...
YOU KNOW EVERYTHING!

I DON'T UNDER-
STAND, SIR! WHY
DO YOU LONG FOR
ME? I'M AN
**UNDER-
TAKER!**



I KNOW,
MR. BOXER!

YOU WATCH AS THE FIGURE IN THE
GLOOM BEGINS TO UNTIE HIS DRESS-
ING GOWN! YOU STRAIN YOUR EYES,
TRYING TO MAKE OUT HIS FEATURES...

THAT'S NOT I, SEN?
FOR YOU, MR. BOXER!
THE OLD FOOOOO
GRIEF DID HIS
JOB WELL!

HE... HE
CURED
YOU?



THE FIGURE BEFORE YOU SHOWS HIS NOSE TO THE
FLOOR! A STRANGE GLOW DRIFTS TOWARD YOU...NOT
THE GLOW OF INCENSE...



YES! HE CURED ME! HE KILLED
THE EVIL HALF OF MY SPLIT-
PERSONALITY! IT'S DEAD!
KILLED IT FOR GOOD!

THAT... THAT
SMELL!

YOU KNOW THAT DON'T IT'S FAMILIAR TO YOU.
ZACHARY! BUT YOU CAN'T PLACE IT! THE INCENSE
SCENT POLLUTED IT...



BUT SOON AFTER...A STRANGE
THING BEGAN TO HAPPEN.
MR. BOXER! THAT'S WHY I
SENT FOR YOU...

TURN ON THE
LIGHT! THIS
HAS GONE FAR
ENOUGH!

FOR A MOMENT, THE LIGHT BLINDS YOU! THEN YOU SEE HIM! HE
STANDS BEFORE YOU CLOTHED ONLY IN SHORTS! AND HALF OF HIS
BODY...



YES, MR. BOXER! HALF OF MY BODY
IS DEAD, TOO! IT'S DIESING! I
CAN'T STAND THE SMELL! I SENT FOR
YOU BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO

EMBALM IT!

GOOD
LORD!

HEHEHE! YES! THAT'S MY STORY,
DOLLS! POOR MR. BLANK! REALLY
HAD A SPLIT- PERSONALITY!...
RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE OF HIM!
THE OLD FOOOOO GRIEF TOOK
HIM SERIOUS! AS FOR MR. BOXER...
THAT'S THE FIRST HALF-ANDY JOB HE
EVER FACED! AS HE SAGGERS,
"HALF A CORPSE IS BETTER THAN
NONE... IN MY RACKET!" OH... IF

YOU WANT PHOTOS
OF ME AND THE
OTHER SHOW-
BOATERS, HEAD
MY COUNTRY!
IT TELLS ALL
ABOUT THAT
RACKET! "BYE
NOW!"



AND THE
END

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLO! WELCOME TO THE HAUNT OF FEAR, KIDNERS! YEA...IT'S YOUR CREEPS-COOKER-UPPER, THE OLD WITCH! I'VE GOT THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON LIT, AND ITS EVIL BREW IS BUBBLING AND STEAMING! COME ON IN! WE'LL HAVE A REGULAR OLD-FASHIONED FISH-FRY! YEA! MY STORY THIS TIME CONCERNS FISH... POOR FISH THAT GET CAUGHT! I CALL THIS PORTION OF PUTRID PALPITATIONS DISHED FROM MY DORRINGTON DELVINGS INTO THE DELIRIOUS...

HOOK, LINE, AND STINKER!



STANLEY LOOKED UP AT THE SHINY WOODEN PLAQUE ABOVE THE FIREPLACE AND SMILED! THE SLICK STREAMLINED FORM OF THE FISH MOUNTED UPON THE PLAQUE GLEAMED IN THE FLICKERING FIRE-LIGHT! STANLEY CHUCKLED! SERVICE GLANCED UP FROM HER KNITTING...

WELL, HENT THAT LIT'LE DEVIL SURE WAS CLEVER, BEHAGET! AL MOBY GOT AWAY TOOT! BUT I LARDED HIM! GAVE ME A TOWEN FISHIE THOUGH...

I KNOW, STANLEY! YOU... SHAN... TOLD ME...

STANLEY TURNED FROM THE MOUNTED FISH AND STUDIED THE FACE OF THE FORTY-YEAR OLD WOMAN SEATED BESIDE HIM...

"MATTER, BERNICE? YOU ANGRY 'BOUT SOMETHING?"

"NO, STANLEY! I... I... SO... I'M NOT ANGRY!"



STANLEY PATTED THE UNHAPPY WOMAN'S HEAVING SHOULDER...

"AW, BERNICE? DON'T START THAT ALL OVER AGAIN!"

"BUT... SO... I CAN'T SO ON LIKE THIS! FIFTEEN YEARS!"



IT WON'T BE LONG NOW, BERNICE? YOU'LL SEE!

"YOU... SAY THAT EVERY YEAR, STANLEY! I'M TIRED OF WAITING 'ROUND GETTING OLD!"



"BUT... I'M NOT READY TO GET MARRIED YET, BERNICE!"

"WHEN, STANLEY? WHEN WILL YOU BE READY? WE'VE BEEN KEEPING COMPANY FOR ALMOST FIFTEEN YEARS! YOU'RE AS READY AS YOU'LL EVER BE!"

"GIVE ME A FEW MORE MONTHS! THAT'S ALL I ASK!"

"WE LOVE EACH OTHER, STANLEY! I'M LONELY HERE IN THIS OLD HOUSE ALL BY MYSELF..."



"I COME TO SEE YOU EVERY DAY. DON'T STAY SUPPER HERE! I COME OVER FOR BREAKFAST, TOO! WHAT MORE CAN I DO?"

"YOU CAN LIVE HERE! IF WE WERE MARRIED, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO GO HOME AT NIGHT!"

"HONEY, DEAR? THANK YOU FOR SUGGESTING, BUT IT'S PAST ELEVEN! I MUST BE GOING! TOMORROW'S SATURDAY, YOU KNOW!"

"I... I KNOW! GOING ON A FISHING TRIP AGAIN, EH, STANLEY?"



THAT'S RIGHT!
HOPES I CATCH A
BIG ONE! SEE,
IT'S *AWAY* OF YOU
TO TAKE CARE OF
MY PROPHIES
FOR ME, BERNICE!

THIS WILL BE
FOUR HOME
SHANKERS!
NIGHT AS
WELL...

GOOD-NIGHT,
BERNICE!
SEE YOU
MONDAY!

GOOD-NIGHT,
STANLEY!

WEE, WEE! POOR BERNICE! FOR *FIF-
TEEN YEARS*, SHE'S BEEN WAITING
FOR STANLEY TO POP THE *QUES-
TION*? FOR FIFTEEN YEARS HE'S
BEEN COMING OVER *EVERY NIGHT*...
EATING SUPPER... SITTING TILL
ELEVEN... THEN GOING BACK TO HIS
LITTLE FURNISHED ROOM? USED TO BE
BERNICE WOULD LOOK *FORWARD* TO THE
WEEK ENDS... WHEN THEY COULD BE TOGETHER
ALL DAY! THEY'D GO ON
PROPHIES... LONG WALKS... TO
THE *MOVIES!* BUT LATELY,
STANLEY'S DISOCCURED...
FISHING!

BERNICE CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND STANLEY AND
LOOKED IT! THEN SHE TURNED TO THE *PLAQUES*
HANGING AROUND THE LIVING-ROOM... *PLAQUES* WITH
FISH MOUNTED UPON THEM...

I... I *HAVE* YOU! EACH *ONE* OF YOU!
I *HAVE* YOU FOR TAKING HIM
AWAY FROM ME!

EVERY TIME STANLEY WOULD GO ON A FISHING TRIP,
HE'D BRING HOME A MOUNTED TROPHY! AND HE'D BE
SO PROUD...

YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE
FIGHT HE PUT UP, BERNICE!
TOOK ME *HALF* AN HOUR TO
LAND 'IM! ALMOST GOT
AWAY, TOO! ISN'T HE A BEAUTY?

LOVELY...
CHUCKE...
STANLEY!

BERNICE DESIRED THE MOUNTED FISH STANLEY
WOULD BRING! BUT WHAT COULD SHE *DO*? HE
LIVED IN A SMALL FURNISHED ROOM! HE *COULDN'T*
KEEP THEM *THERE*...

MRS. FLINTPEACH, MY LAND-
LADY, WOULD *BLOW A FUSE*
IF I HUNG THEM ON HER
WALL, BERNICE!

OH, I DON'T MIND
KEEPING THEM FOR
YOU, STANLEY! AFTER
ALL... YOU WILL BE
LIVING *HERE* WHEN
WE'RE... WHEN WE'RE...

BERNICE TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS AND TIP-TOED
UPSTAIRS TO HER LONELY BED! SHE SLEPT AS SHE
SLEPT BENEATH THE COLD SHEETS...

OH, CAN'T I WONDER WHAT I'LL
DO TOMORROW! *WEEK ENDS* ARE
SO LONELY NOW... NOW THAT
STANLEY GOES... *SEE... FISHING*...
SOS...

THAT MONDAY MORNING...

GOOD MORNING, STANLEY!

MORNING, BERNICE! I THOUGHT I'D STOP IN FOR BREAKFAST!



COFFEE'S ALMOST READY! DID YOU DID YOU HAVE ANY LUCK?

HUP! OH, YEAH! CAUGHT A BEAUTY! IT'S BEING MOUNTED! I'LL BRING IT OVER TONIGHT!



I COULD PICK IT UP FOR YOU, STANLEY!

ON THAT'S ALL RIGHT, BERNICE! COFFEE'S GOOD THIS MORNING!



THAT NIGHT...

ISN'T IT A BEAUTY, BERNICE! BIGGEST PERCH I EVER LARDED!

IT... IT'S LOVELY, DEAR! WHERE... WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO MARE IT? WE'RE ROLLING OUT OF ROOM!

HERE'S A SPOT!

STANLEY! HAVE YOU DECIDED ABOUT MOP'S MEAN... WHEN?



SOON, BERNICE!

I THOUGHT MAYBE THIS WEEKEND WE COULD DRIVE UPSTATE AND STOP OFF AT A JUSTICE-OF-THE-PEACE! IT WOULD BE SO...

OH, NO! NOT THIS WEEKEND, BERNICE! I'M GOING FISHING AGAIN THIS WEEK-END!

OH... I SEE!



THAT SATURDAY MORNING, AS BERNICE PUT ON HER WALKING SHOES AND SET OFF FOR HER USUAL COUNTRY STROLL, EVERY TIME STANLEY'D TAKEN TO GOING FISHING ON WEEK-ENDS, BERNICE'D STARTED WENDING INTO THE WOODS AND FIELDS OUTSIDE OF TOWN TO PASS THE TIME...

TOWARDS EVENING, AS BERNICE WAS CUTTING ACROSS A FIELD, LADEN DOWN WITH FLOWERS SHE'D PICKED, SHE HEARD VOICES UP AHEAD OF HER! THEY WERE COMING FROM BEHIND A HAYSTACK...

"SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE ENJOYING A PICKING OVER THERE! WELL, I WON'T DISTURB THEM! I'LL JUST..."

"GIBBLE-GIBBLE! THAT'S ENOUGH, YOU—YOU"

"OH... JUST ONE MORE KISS!"

"SIGH! WHAT A LOVELY DAY! STANLEY IS LUCKY! HE HAS AWESOME WEATHER!"



BERNICE'S BLOOD FROZE IN HER VEINS! SHE STIFFENED! THE MAN'S VOICE! THE MAN SOUNDED LIKE... GASP... STANLEY!



A FANTY SHEERE STIFFED LAILY ACROSS THE FIELD CARRYING THE BUNDLE OF NEW-MOWN HAY WITH IT! BERNICE LISTENED...

"WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO MARRY ME, STANLEY DEAR?"



BERNICE EDGED CLOSER! SHE COULDN'T BELIEVE HER EARS!

"DID YOU FEEL HER YET, STANLEY? DID YOU FEEL HER ABOUT 68?"

"NOT YET, MONKEY! I WILL!"



"WHERE'D YOU TELL HER YOU WED ON WEEK-ENDS, STANLEY?"

"I TELL HER I GO FISHING!"



"GIBBLE! AND SHE BELIEVED YOU?"

"OF COURSE! I SHOW HER A MOUNTAIN FISH, AS PROOF! AND I TELL HER WHEN I CAUGHT IT! OF COURSE SHE BELIEVED ME!"



BERNICE HAD TO COVER HER MOUTH TO KEEP FROM SCREAMING! SHE TURNED TO RUN AS...

BUT LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT HER EMMA, DEAR! THE WEEK-END'S ALMOST HALF OVER! LET'S NOT WASTE ANY OF ITS PRECIOUS MOMENTS!

OH, STANLEY! YOU'RE SO SWEET...



BERNICE SCAMMERED ACROSS THE FIELD AND THROUGH THE WOODS...

STANLEY... AND ANOTHER WOMAN! HE LIES TO ME! HE... HE TOLD ME HE WAS FISHING, AND ALL THE TIME HE WAS SEEING HER!



SHE ARRIVED HOME BRUISED AND TORN... GASPING FOR BREATH...

WHAT WILL I DO? I'M LOSING HIM! LOSING HIM!



BERNICE SPENT THE REST OF THE WEEK-END CRYING HER HEART OUT! SHE KEPT THINKING OF STANLEY... AND THAT WOMAN...

...AND... SON... I... SUPPOSE... SON... HE'LL BRING ME... ANOTHER MOUNTED... FISH... TO... SON... NAME... UP... WITH... SON... THE REST... OF THEM...



AND BERNICE WAS RIGHT! ON MONDAY NIGHT...

GOOD EVENING, BERNICE! LOOK!

GOOD EVENING, STANLEY! COME... COME IN...



LOOK AT THIS ONE! ONE OF THE BOYS UP AT THE LAKE TOLD ME IT WAS THE BIGGEST RAINBOW HED EVER SEEN COME OUT OF THOSE WATERS...

WHAT LAKE, STANLEY?



LAKE CHIPPAWA, WHERE I ALWAYS GO! I HAD THIS BAY BEIN' FOR ALMOST AN HOUR...

YOU'VE HAD ME GOING TOO, STANLEY! FOR A LONG TIME...





HAVE YOU GOT SOMETHING.

I...I...NO, STANLEY!



OH! WELL! WHERE WAS IT OH, YES! ALMOST AN HOUR! THIS RAINBOW FOUGHT... BUT I FINALLY LANDED HIM!

FIFTEEN YEARS YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING ME!



NOW, HE'S MINE! ALL MINE! I...
BERNICE!

NOW YOU'RE GOING TO BE MINE, STANLEY!



BERNICE! FOR GOD'S SAKE! PUT DOWN THAT KNIFE!

I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOUR "FISHING" TRIPS, STANLEY... ALL ABOUT THAT ENEMA...



...BUT SHE CAN'T HAVE YOU! YOU'RE MINE! I HOOKED YOU FIFTEEN YEARS AGO... AND I'M GOING TO LAND YOU!

BERNICE!

WHEN BERNICE'S MAID CAME THE NEXT MORNING, SHE FOUND THE MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN STANDING BEFORE A HUGE PLAQUE HANGING ABOVE THE FIRE-PLACE! THE EARLY MORNING LIGHT GLEAMED ON THE BLOOD-STAINED FISHBONE MOUNTED UPON IT! BERNICE'S VOICE WAS SLIGHTLY HIGH-PITCHED AND SHAKY AS SHE CHUCKLED...



EEK, EEE! HE WAS A CLEVER LITTLE DEVIL! ALMOST GOT AWAY, TOO! BUT I LANDED HIM! EEK, EEE! GAVE ME A TOUGH FIGHT, THOUGH! EEK, EEE! FIFTEEN... EEK, EEE YEARS...

EEK, EEK! YOU! POOR STANLEY WAS FINALLY CAUGHT! AS FOR BERNICE... WELL, THEY PUT HER AWAY IN A PADDED CELLY ALL DAY LONG! SHE JUST SITS... AND SITS... AND SITS! BUT NOTHING AFFECTS ON THE NURSE! SHE DANGLES DOWN THE DUMB BRAIN! I WISH STANLEY WILL BE THE ONLY POOR FISH SHE EVER HOOKED!



EEK, EEE! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAD-HAUS, THE HAUNT OF FEAR!

THE END



THE VAULT KEEPER

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NO. 27

OCT-NOV

15

10¢

THE VAULT OF

10¢

HORROR

FEATURING...



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE CRYPT-KEEPER





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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! STATUS, FRIENDS! HOW PERFECTLY *AWFUL* IT IS TO BE STARRING INTO YOUR LEERING, EXPECTANT FACES AGAIN! IT ALMOST *FRIGHTENS* ME! ALMOST... BUT NOT QUITE, FOR LIVING HERE IN THE VAULT... I'VE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO TERRIFYING SIGHTS! ANYWAY... I HOPE YOU'RE READY FOR A *GRUESOME* TARN THAT OUGHT TO TICKLE YOUR FANCY! IT'S A REAL *DRIZZLER* THAT'LL KEEP YOU GUESSING! I CALL IT,

SILVER THREADS AMONG THE MOLD!



SOMEWHERE A TOWER CLOCK INTONE THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT. IN HIS STUDIO, GEORGE HARRINGTON WORKED INTENTLY, MODELING THE FINAL TOUCHES ON HIS LATEST STATUE...



GEORGE MOVED BACK TO SURVEY HIS WORK. A SATISFIED SMILE CAME TO HIS FACE AND HE PUT DOWN HIS TOOLS...

WONDERFUL! ONE OF MY BEST! ALL RIGHT, CHRISTINE... YOU CAN RELAX NOW!



IN THE CORNER OF THE ROOM, A BEAUTIFUL RED-HEADED GIRL STEPPED DOWN FROM THE MODEL'S STAND AND CORNERED A LIGHT BOB...

ALL DONE, GEORGE?

YES! IT'S JUST LIKE YOU! I'LL SET A GOOD PRICE FOR IT, DEAR! I'LL BUY YOU SOMETHING NICE!



YOU'RE A DARING, GEORGE, TO BUY ME SO MANY THINGS!

WHY SHOULDN'T I BUY YOU MORE? WITHOUT YOU TO GIVE ME INSPIRATION, MY STATUES WOULD BE LIFELESS!



I LOVE YOU SO MUCH, CHRISTINE! IF YOU EVER LEFT ME, I'D GO INSANE! WHEN WILL YOU MARRY ME? YOU SAID WE'D BE MARRIED SOMEDAY!

YES, DEAR... SOMEDAY! BUT NOT NOW! BE PATIENT!



KNOW IT'S SO EASY FOR YOU TO SAY THAT! YOU DON'T KNOW THE TORTURE I FEEL! YOU...

NOW DON'T GET EXCITED, GEORGE! IT'S LATE AND I WANT TO GET DRESSED!



CHRISTINE SLIPPED FROM HIS GRASP AND GRASP-PEARED BEHIND A SCREEN TO DRESS. THE SCULPTOR SMILED PERVERSIBLY AND GAZED FONDLY AT THE FIGURE HE HAD CREATED. HE GASESSSED IT TENDERLY...

CHRISTINE, YOU WILL COME TOMORROW, WON'T YOU? I'LL HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU!

A SURPRISE? WHY, OF COURSE I'LL BE HERE! IS IT THAT ENNIS WRAP I SAID I WANTED? TELL ME!



A FEW MOMENTS LATER, THE RED-HEAD STEPPED FROM BEHIND THE SCREEN, FULLY CLOTHED...

NO, NO! I WON'T TELL YOU ANYTHING! YOU'LL SEE TOMORROW!

YOU'RE SO SWEET TO ME, GEORGE! I'LL BE HERE EARLY TOMORROW! GOOD NIGHT, DEAR!



LATE THE FOLLOWING MORNING, SHE ARRIVED AT THE STUDIO. THE SCULPTOR USHERED HER IN EXCITEDLY...

COME IN, DARLING! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! WHAT KEPT YOU?

I'M SO SORRY, GEDRIC. BEAR! I OVERSLEPT! WHERE'S THE SURPRISE?



IT'S NOT JUNK! THESE ARE THE MATERIALS I NEED TO BEGIN THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF MY CAREER!

THIS IS THE BIG SURPRISE YOU HAD FOR ME?



CERTAINLY! I'M GOING TO DO A LIFE-SIZE STATUE OF YOU, CHRISTINE!... AND THEN I'M GOING TO PLATE IT WITH SILVER! COME... I'LL SHOW YOU HOW IT WORKS!



IT'S SIMPLE! THIS BAT IS FILLED WITH A SILVER SALT SOLUTION! THE STATUE IS PLACED IN THE BAT ATTACHED TO AN ELECTRODE! A BLOCK OF SILVER IS ALSO PLACED IN THE SOLUTION AND HOOKED UP IN THE SAME MANNER TO THE OTHER ELECTRODE! THEN YOU TURN ON THE CURRENT!



MINUTE PARTICLES LEAVE THE BLOCK OF SILVER, TRAVEL THROUGH THE SOLUTION AND ARE DEPOSITED ON THE STATUE! IN A SHORT TIME, THE STATUE IS COMPLETELY COATED WITH SILVER! ISN'T IT WONDERFUL?



OH, SURE... POSITIVELY AMAZING...

HEH-HEH, HEH! GEDRIC WAS SO ENTHUSED WITH HIS ELECTROPLATING OUTFIT THAT HE NEVER EVER NOTICED CHRISTINE'S DISAPPOINTMENT! IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS HE MADE SKETCHES AND STUDIES FOR THE STATUE THAT WAS TO BE HIS GREAT MASTERPIECE! AT LAST WORK WAS BEGUN...



ONE DAY, SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, CEDRIC HAD TO LEAVE THE STUDIO FOR A WHILE... AND WHEN HE RETURNED, HE HEARD CHRISTINE SPEAKING TO SOMEONE ON THE PHONE.

YES...YES, I'LL MEET YOU TONIGHT, AT THE USUAL PLACE! I HAVE TO HANG UP NOW! YES...ALL RIGHT! BYE!

MEET SOMEONE? USUAL PLACE? HMM... I WONDER WHO...



SUSPICIOUS, CEDRIC WAITED A FEW MINUTES BEFORE ENTERING... BUT WHEN THE DAY'S WORK WAS FINISHED AND CHRISTINE HAD LEFT, HE FOLLOWED.

CHRISTINE DOESN'T LIVE IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD! WAIT! SHE'S TURNING INTO THE PARK!



KEEPING WELL HIDDEN, CEDRIC SAW HER ARRIVE AT A SECLUDED SPOT WHERE A MAN WAITED...

WHO...? HE'S TAKING HER IN HIS ARMS! SHE'S KISSING HIM!! THAT... THAT TWO-TIMING BITCH!



TREMBLING WITH ANGER, HE CROPT NEARER...

OH, GARY, IF WE DON'T MEET EVERY NIGHT, I COULDN'T STAND BEING WITH CEDRIC ALL DAY!

DON'T WORRY, HONEY! WE'LL BE MARRIED SOON, AND YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO SEE HIM AGAIN!



IF HE WEREN'T SO GENEROUS WITH MONEY AND GIFTS, I THINK I'D SPIT IN HIS FACE EVERY TIME HE COMES NEAR ME!

I KNOW...



... BUT BY HOOKING AND SELLING THOSE GIFTS, WE ADDED A NICE PIECE OF CHANGE TO OUR BANK ACCOUNT, BABY!

WE HAVE ENOUGH, GARY! WE CAN BE MARRIED NOW! LET'S NOT WAIT ANY LONGER!



OHAY, CHRIS! TOMORROW NIGHT! TRY TO GET CEDRIC TO GIVE YOU ONE MORE LARGE SHT... GARY! THEN WE'LL TAKE OFF AND NEVER COME BACK!

OH, DARLING! AT LAST! I'M SO HAPPY!



THE NEXT DAY IN THE STUDIO, CERRIC SEETHED AND FUMED WHILE HE WORKED ON HIS MASTERPIECE! MANY TIMES HIS BRIDE REWAKES STARTED THEM BICKERING! NOW CHRISTINE NOTICED THE CHANGE IN HIM, BUT SHE DIDN'T CARE! THIS WAS HER LAST DAY AND SHE WAS JUST *FUCKING* FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO TELL HIM OFF! ANYWAY, BY THE END OF THE DAY, THEY WERE AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS!



WELL! I'M CERTAINLY GLAD *THIS* DAY IS OVER WITH! I CAN'T WAIT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

NATURALLY!... SO YOU CAN MEET *GARY*, YOUR HANDSOME LOVER! SO YOU CAN RUN OFF AND GET MARRIED ON MY MONEY!



WHA...? HOW DID YOU FOLLOWED ME? YOU SLIMY LITTLE SNEAK!

DON'T CALL ME NAMES, YOU LYING, CHEATING, GOLD-DIGGER!



WELL, THAT DOES IT! YOU GRIMMY LOVE-SICK LITTLE JEER! I WOULDN'T STAY HERE ANOTHER MINUTE, NO MATTER WHAT YOU PAID ME!

FIGHT! DOUBLE-CROSSING, WOMAN!



OH, SHUT UP! YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL I GAVE A BOON LIKE YOU ANY AFFECTION AT ALL!

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME? I'VE BEEN SO GOOD TO YOU!



YOU GOT WHAT YOU PAID FOR! IT'S ALL OVER NOW, AND I DON'T KNOW HOW I PUT UP WITH YOU *THIS* LONG! I'M FACKING! I HOPE I NEVER SEE YOU OR YOUR STATUES AGAIN!



AT THAT SAME MOMENT, GARY WAS ALSO FACKING...



SEVERAL HOURS PASSED...

SHE PROBABLY HAD TO WORK LATE* OF ALL NIGHTS I OH, WELL... NOTHING TO DO BUT WAIT!



GARY SAT DOWN IN A CHAIR AND SLEPT! WHEN HE AWOK...

LUPPA MINE! IT'S ALMOST FOUR A.M. AND CHRIS ISN'T HERE YET! *SOMETHING* MUST HAVE OCCURRED HER! SHE WOULDN'T BE LATE *FORWARD!* IF SHE COULD HELP IT! I'LL ... I'LL GIVE HER A FEW MORE HOURS...



BUT WHEN EIGHT O'CLOCK CAME AND CHRISTINE STILL HADN'T SHOWN UP, GARY WENT TO GEORGE'S STUDIO.

I'M LOOKING FOR CHRISTINE* WHEN IS SHE?

CHRISTINE? I HAVEN'T SEEN HER SINCE YESTERDAY!



YOU MEAN SHE WASN'T HERE LAST NIGHT?

OF COURSE NOT! WE FINISHED OUR WORK ABOUT SIX PM! SHE OUBESSED, PACKED HER THINGS... AND LEFT! WHY ARE YOU SO CONCERNED?



SHE WAS TO MEET ME LAST NIGHT, BUT REYEN SHOWED UP! I'M WORRIED!

OH! YOU MUST BE *GARY!* SHE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT YOU! NOW I CAN SEE WHY SHE PREFERS YOU TO ME! I... I WAS STUPID TO THINK SHE COULD LOVE ME!



NEVEN MIND THAT STUFF NOW! WHERE IS SHE?

I DON'T KNOW! WE DID GUARREL BECAUSE OF YOU, BUT NOTHING... *ER... VIOLENT!* I SAW I COULDN'T CHANGE HER MIND AND SHE LEFT! I HOPE NOTHING'S HAPPENED TO HER!



HEY, HEH! BARY SEARCHED *EVERYWHERE*... BUT HE COULDN'T FIND CHRISTINE! HE EVEN HAD THE COPS INVESTIGATE... BUT THEY TOO, COULDN'T FIND NO TRACE OF HER! MONTHS PASSES, AND BARY GAVE UP HOPE OF EVER SEEING HER AGAIN!



SAG AND OLD NECK BARTY AGAIN VISITED CHRIS...

OH, HELLO, BARTY! HEAR ANYTHING NEW ABOUT CHRISTINE?

NO, THE POLICE HAVE CLOSED THE CASE! I'LL NEVER SEE HER AGAIN! BUT... THAT SILVER STATUE OF HER...



OH, THAT? I FINISHED IT THE NIGHT CHRISTINE DISAPPEARED! IT'S BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T IT?

YES... IT IS! I WANT TO BUY IT! WOULD YOU SELL IT?



WELL, YES! BUT IT WOULD COST YOU A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT! I CARE HERE TO BUY IT AND PRICE DOES NOT MATTER! IT'LL BE... SORT OF A REMEMBRANCE!



THE STATUE WAS DELIVERED TO BARTY'S APARTMENT THE FOLLOWING EVENING. HE TOOK A BOTTLE AND TWO GLASSES FROM HIS LIQUOR CABINET, SAT DOWN AND BEGAN TO DRINK HEAVILY...



SILENTLY, HE SAT STARING AT THE STATUE, DRINKING FIRST "HIS" GLASS, THEN "HERS"! IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE HE BEGAN TO FEEL THE EFFECTS...



CHRIS... CHRIS, WHERE ARE YOU? WHAT HAPPENED, BARTY? YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU! WE... WE WERE GOING TO BE SO HAPPY, BUT NOW...

...NOW YOU'VE DISAPPEARED! AND I'M LEFT ALL BY MYSELF WITH ONLY A STATUE TO REMEMBER YOU BY! ONLY A STATUE TO... TO TALK TO... PUT MY ARMS AROUND... GOGGS!



UNABLE TO MAINTAIN HIS BALANCE, BARTY CAUSED THE BEAUTIFUL SILVER-COATED STATUE TO FALL! IT STRUCK THE WALL SHARPLY...



WITH DIFFICULTY, BARY MANAGED TO STAND THE STATUE UPRIGHT AGAIN! IT WASN'T UNTIL THEN THAT HE SAW AN OBJECT LYING ON THE RUG.

OH, MY GOSH! I'VE BROKEN THE STATUE'S HAND! WONDER IF I CAN PUT IT BACK ON! I'LL HAVE TO TRY!



HE KNEELED BEFORE THE STATUE... AND SUDDENLY, AN EXPRESSION OF HORROR ELECTRIFIED HIS FACE...



A TERRIFYING THOUGHT RUSHED INTO HIS MIND! QUICKLY, HE GATHERED TOOLS AND BEGAN TO PRY OPEN THE STATUE'S HEAD!



THE METAL SPLIT OPEN AND FELL AWAY IN TWO PIECES, UNVEILING THE ROTTED, DECAYED, PUTRID-SMELLING HEAD OF A WOMAN! THERE WAS NO DOUBT WHO SHE WAS... FOR, TO BARY, THE FLAMING RED HAIR WAS THE MOST POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION!



HEH, HEH! THOSE OF YOU WHO THINK A BODY CAN'T BE ELECTRIFIED! HEAR THIS! GEDDIG FIRST COMPLETELY SWEARED CHRISTINE WITH ALUMINUM PAINT, WHICH MADE HER A CONDUCTOR OF ELECTRICITY! BUT DON'T TRY IT ON ANY OF YOUR FRIENDS... IT'LL MAKE THINGS A LITTLE HARD FOR THEM! CHRISTINE WAS A VERY INCONSIDERATE PERSON... BUT SHE BECAME A GRIFF OFF THE DL BLOCK... IN THE END! NOW, GET READY FOR A TALE BY THAT BIG BUCKHEAD, THE GRIFF-KEEPER!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

GREETINGS, MOSES AND SHOULD I WELCOME TO THE CRYPT AGAIN? YES, IT'S YOUR TELLER OF TERROR TALES, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, SPOOKING! AFTER TWO FAIRY TALE OF THE VAULT-KEEPER'S... I REALLY FEEL SORRY FOR YOU! SO I'LL TELL YOU ONE OF MY MY MOST HORRIBLE TALES TO MAKE UP! IT'S ABOUT AN OLD MAN WHO ALWAYS DRIES A BLACK-DRAPE, OLD FASHIONED... WELL... I'LL BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING... WITH THE TITLE! I CALL IT...

**PEOPLE WHO LIVE
IN BRASS HEARSESES...**



THE HORSE SHOTS AS IT MOVES ALONG THE MAIN STREET HAULING THE OLD FASHIONED, BLACK-VELVET DRAPED HEARSE-WAGON BEHIND IT! THE DRIVER SITS STIFFLY, HIS FACE PALE AND GRIM! CHILDREN LOPE ALONG BESIDE THE FUNERAL CART, TELLING UP AT THE EXPRESSION-LESS GUM-SUCKER REIN-HOLDERS...

"HAWES MR. BRAD? THAT'S SO FUNNY."
MR. BRAD?

"COME DOWN FOR YOUR NITTLES."
MR. BRAD?

"HEY! LIKE OUR MOOKING... BRAD?"



BUT MR BYRD'S EXPRESSION DOESN'T CHANGE! HE JUST SITS THERE LISTENING TO THE KIDS' INSULTS AND JIBES, MOVING THROUGH THE SMALL-TOWN MAIN STREET! FINALLY, HE REINS UP THE BLACK-GRANED HEARSE BEFORE THE GENERAL STORE.

AFTERNOON, LIONEL! WHAT'LL IT BE TODAY?
 USUAL, ED? SACK OF FLOUR? SACK OF SUGAR? CAN OF SHORTENIN' BOTTLE OF TOILET WATER BEANS...



OLD LIONEL BYRD NEVER BUDGES! HE DICTATES HIS ORDER TO ED, THE STOREKEEPER, AND WAITS ON HIS PORCH IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT OF THE HEARSE TILL IT IS BROUGHT OUT AND STOWED IN THE BACK.

OKAY, LIONEL! THAT'S THE LOT! THAT'LL BE \$12.00 AS USUAL!
 THANKS, ED! HERE 'YARE! BE SEEN! YUH?



THEN MR BYRD CRACKS HIS WHIP AND, TURNING THE OLD-FASHIONED FUNERAL WAGON AROUND, HEAVES ON OUT OF THE SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN ONCE AGAIN.



THE SHRILL CAT-CALLS OF THE CHILDREN DRIFT AFTER LIONEL BYRD AS HE AND HIS STRANGE VEHICLE DISAPPEAR UP THE DUSTY DIRT ROAD BEYOND THE TOWN LIMITS...



HEH, HEH! YES, DEAR READERS... NOBODY IN THAT TOWN KNOWS WHY OLD LIONEL BYRD DRIVES THAT HEARSE WAGON... WHY HE NEVER COMES INTO TOWN WITHOUT IT... WHY HE REFUSES TO GET OFF IT WHEN HE DOES COME IN ON HIS RARE MONTHLY VISITS! HEH, HEH! NOBODY, THAT IS, BUT ME...



ALL THE TOWNSFOLK KNOW IS THAT HE DROVE INTO TOWN LIKE THAT ABOUT A YEAR AGO! DIDN'T SAY WHERE HE CAME FROM! JUST RENTED AN OLD DESERTED MOOSE WAY UP IN THE WOODS! WHEN THE KIDS WENT NOSE IN AROUND UP THERE...



AT FIRST, EVERYBODY MISTRUSTED OLD LIONEL! THEY DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY HE ISOLATED HIMSELF! NOBODY EVER SAW HIM EXCEPT FOR WHEN HE'D COME INTO TOWN, DRIVING THE HEARSE...



ED, THE STOREKEEPER, USED TO GET MAD WHEN OLD LIONEL DROVE INTO TOWN! OLD MR. BYRD WOULD REFUSE TO GET DOWN OFF THE HEARSE! HE DEMANDED THAT ED COME OUT FROM HIS STORE AND TAKE HIS ORDER.

THE STORE'S INSIDE. WHEE! NOT OUT ON THE STREET! YOU WANTA BUY SOMETHIN' YOU COME IN AND BUY IT!

I GOT MY REASONS FOR STAYIN' UP HERE. ED! YOU WANTA SELL ME SOME VITTLES OR NOT?

BUT AFTER A WHILE THE TOWNSFOLK GOT USED TO QUEER OLD MR. BYRD! AFTER ALL, THEY ONLY SAW HIM ONCE A MONTH! AND HOWDY! EVER WENT TO VISIT HIM UP THERE WHERE HE LIVED! EVEN ED DIDN'T MIND WAITING ON HIM OUT IN THE STREET AFTER A WHILE.

JUST PUT THE STUFF IN THE BAGG, ED!

SURE THING, LIONEL!

THE KIDS USED TO PEER INTO THE HEARSE WHILE ED WAS LOADING IT WITH THE PURCHASES.

SHUGGS! HE AIN'T GOT ANYTHIN' IN THERE!

YEAH! I'LL BET THERE'S SOMETHIN' BEHIND THAT CURTAIN!

HEH, HEH! YEP! OLD LIONEL USED THE HEARSE PARTITIONED OFF WITH A CURTAIN! WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S BEHIND IT TODAY? I'LL TELL YOU! FOR THE STORY, WE'LL HAVE TO GO BACK A BIT... BACK TO THE TIME BEFORE HE EVER CAME TO THAT SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN IN HIS STRANGE VEHICLE...

BACK THEN, BACK BEFORE HE EVEN OWNED THE OLD FASHIONED HEARSE, LIONEL LIVED IN A LOVELY CABIN WAY UP IN THE MOUNTAINS IN ANOTHER COUNTY! ONE DAY, TWO MEN CAME TO THE CABIN...

LOOK, NICK! SMOKE COMIN' OUT!

SOMEBODY LIVES THERE, RED!

THE TWO MEN THAT CAME TO LIONEL'S CABIN WAY UP IN THE MOUNTAINS WERE STRANGERS TO THOSE PARTS! THEY KNEW NOTHING ABOUT LIONEL BYRD! THEY WERE FUGITIVES... FUGITIVES FROM THE LAW.

WINDOWS ARE COVERED! CAN'T SEE WHO'S INSIDE!

G'MORN! LET'S KNOCK!

SO THE FUGITIVES, NICK AND RED, KNOCKED ON THE BYRD CABIN DOOR! A VOICE ANSWERED...

WAIT A MINUTE! I'LL BE READY IN A MINUTE!

THIS LOOKS LIKE A NICE SPOT TO HIDE OUT FOR A WHILE, NICK!

YOU'RE RIGHT, RED!

FINALLY, THE VOICE INSIDE THE CABIN SOUNDED AGAIN.

ALL RIGHT! YOU CAN COME IN NOW!

SO AHEAD, NICK!

NICK PUSHED OPEN THE CABIN DOOR! HE PEEPED INTO THE GLOOM! OLD MR. BYRD SAT ON A BENCH BEFORE A DRAPED DOORWAY.

WHO WHO ARE YOU TWO?

HELLO, OLD TIMER!

MAYBE YOU CAN HELP US!

RED CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND THEM.

HELP YOU? YOU LOST?

ER... YEAH! THAT'S IT! LOST!

YEAH! OUR GAF BROKE DOWN!

SUDDENLY, THE STILL MOUNTAIN AIR OUTSIDE THE CABIN WAS SPLIT WITH THE KNIFING SOUND OF HAYING HOUNDS.

NICK! THE BLOOD HOUNDS!

I DIDN'T THINK THEY WERE SO CLOSE!

BLOOD HOUNDS! YOU TWO CRIMINALS!

THE BAYING HOWLS DREW CLOSER! NICK WHIPPED OUT A KNIFE AND HELD IT AGAINST THE OLD MAN'S THROAT...

FEARFULS TIMER! WE'RE CRIMINALS! KILLERS!

GO TO THE DOOR! TELL 'EM YOU AIN'T SEEN US!

NO! I AIN'T MOVIN'!

LISTEN, OLD TIMER! YOU DO AS WE SAY OR I'LL SLIT YOUR THROAT!

I'M NOT SURE! 1... 2...

THEY WERE RIGHT OUTSIDE... NICK AND RED'S PURSUERS! THEY WERE HAMMERS ON OLD MAN BYRD'S DOOR.

OPEN UP! IT'S SHERIFF ALLEN!

I'VE MET MR. OLD MAN.

WHAT IS IT, HERR? ANYTHING WRONG?



RED AND NICK WENT BACK INSIDE! AS THEY CAME THROUGH THE DOOR THEY GASPED...

LIONEL SAT UPON THE BENCH BEFORE THE CURTAINED DOORWAY, HIS SHOTGUN POINTED AT THE TWO FUGITIVES.



HOLT!

HE AIN'T DEAD!
BUT... I PUMPED
FIVE 40'S INTO HIM!



THAT'S DOUBLE-BARRELED,
YOU MURDERIN' RATS!
ONE SHELL FOR EACH
OF YOU!

D-DON'T
SHOOT, OLD
TIMES!

WE...WE
DIDN'T
MEANTO.

SUDDENLY RED LOOKED DOWN! HIS EYES WIDENED IN HORROR! A BEARLY POOL OF BLOOD DOZED OUT FROM BENEATH THE DOORWAY DRAPE.

LIONEL LOOKED AT THE TWO MEN.

YOU DIDN'T KILL
ME? YOU KILLED
MY TWIN?

YOUR...
YOUR
TWIN?

YES! MY... MY
SIAMSE TWIN!

GOOD LORD!



LOOK! LOOK!
NICK!

BLOOD!
BUT HE
AIN'T
BLEEDIN'!

NO! I'M
NOT
BLEEDIN'!



LIONEL GOT TO HIS FEET! HE MOVED AWAY FROM THE DOORWAY...

THERE, ATTACHED TO LIONEL'S BACK, WAS THE BODY OF HIS SIAMSE TWIN...TWISTED GROTESQUELY...

DEAD... ALL OUR LIVES WE'VE
LIVED HERE! EVERY-
BODY KNEW ABOUT US!
EVERYBODY BUT YOU!

WHAT...WHAT ARE
YOU GOING TO
DO TO US?



YAAAAAHHH! EEAAGHH!



LIONEL BEGAN TO TIE THE TWO
KILLERS UP...BACK TO BACK...

THERE! NOW YOU'LL KNOW
THE HELPLESSNESS WE
KNEW...BY BROTHER AND I...



THEN HE PUSHED THEM OUT OF THE CABIN AND INTO THE SHALLOW
SHAKE THEY'D DUG FOR HIM...

WE'VE BEEN BURNED FROM SOCIETY!
ALL THESE YEARS! BURNED ALIVE...
JUST AS YOU ARE GOING TO BE!

NO! NO!

HAVE
MERCY?



BUT LIONEL SHOWED NO MERCY! THE SOFT BLACK
EARTH CHOKED OFF MED AND NICK'S SCREAMS AS
LIONEL FILLED THEIR GRAVE.



YAAA...RRR...

EEE...RRR...

HEH, HEH! YEP! RORRDOY IN THAT SMALL NEW ENGLAND
TOWN KNOWS ANY! LIONEL BYND SITS ON HIS BEARDS
... HEVEN GETS DOWN FROM IT! BUT WE KNOW... DON'T
WE, KIDDIES! LIONEL HAD TO BUY THAT BEARSK
AFTER HIS SHAWSE FTRW'S DEATH! WHEN LIONEL
CAME TO THE SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN, HIS
FTRW'S BOSS WAS IN THE BACK... BEHIND THE
CUNTAIN! AND EVERY TIME HE COMES INTO TOWN,
IT'S THERE! YOU, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU DON'T
BELIEVE ME! WELL,
JUST SIT TIGHT!
LIONEL'S COMING
UP THE ROAD NOW!



THERE! HE'S IN FRONT OF HIS OLD HOUSE WAY OUT OF TOWN... THE
ONE WITH THE CURTAINED-UP WINDOWS! SEE HOW HE LOOKS AROUND...
MAKING SURE PRYING EYES AIN'T WATCHING! NOW... NOW HE'S SET-
TING DOWN! THERE! TAKE A GOOD LOOK...



WELL, AFTER ALL! LIONEL'S TWIN
HAS BEEN DEAD A YEAR! ANY
BODY WOULD START REGATTING
BY THEN! WHAT DO YOU THINK THE
TOILET WATER IS FOR! THAT'S
MY STORY, FRIENDS! NOW I'LL TURN
YOU BACK TO THE HAZEL-KEEPER!
HIS COLUMN, WHICH CONTAINS
INFORMATION ON OBTAINING ACTUAL
PHOTOS OF US GHOULMATES
FOLLOWS THE TEXT WHICH FOLLOWS
ME! BYE...



NOW I
REMEMBER!
A MAN'S
BEARDS
IS HIS...
HEH, HEH!

- THE END -

E.C. FANS!

**WE AT E.C. ARE PROUDEST
OF OUR SCIENCE - FICTION
MAGAZINES! LOOK FOR...**



**ANOTHER
"NEW TREND"
ENTERTAINING COMIC!**



**ON SALE NOW
AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!**

TREASURE!

Through the murky blue-green water near the bottom of the reef, Henderson could dimly make out his partner's bulky form moving about clumsily in the diving suit. The oyster-bed for which they had organized this Pacific venture was a complete failure so far . . . it might even be that the mottled map they had bought was a *fraud*! For 2 days now Henderson and his colleague had been plunging into these waters, hoping to discover the fabulous oyster-bed said to house a treasure in black pearls . . . for 2 days they had been searching in vain! Unless they found what they had come so many thousands of miles for, the expedition was going to prove awfully costly. And there was always the danger of encountering one of the huge, octopus said to lurk in these tropical waters . . .

A swirl of bubbles made Henderson lurch around and face his partner, who was pointing excitedly with one gloved hand. Henderson ponderously crossed the ocean floor, one glimpse was enough. A huge oyster, its top clamping shut even as he watched, had revealed for a moment the presence of a gleaming pearl! The partner moved toward it, his sharp knife ready to cut the oyster from the reef . . .

Before the man had a chance to defend himself, Henderson swung savagely and saw the man spinning groggily to the ocean floor. Moving swiftly, despite his weighty diving suit, Henderson jammed his dagger into the man's chest . . . felt the blade tear through the cloth top of the diving-suit . . . knew the steel

had plunged home with deadly effect. Henderson stood erect and grinned. The pearls they had discovered were all his...

The natives up in the boat might begin to ask Henderson questions about his partner, so he diligently ripped loose the air-line and watched it float off through the murky water. When he surfaced, he'd tell the boys that his partner had been killed by an octopus...

His knife ready to slice free the octopus, Henderson whirled in terror as a gigantic shadowy form flickered toward him. Before he could yank on his safety-line, a long sinuous tentacle reached out and circled his arm. He recoiled with revulsion, slashing out frantically with his knife, but he was being completely engulfed by a hideous rubbery mass which was all around him in the same instant. Just before he felt the air-line break, Henderson screamed aloud... OCTOPUS...

Squirming loose from the paralyzing grip was impossible, Henderson realized in panic. The pressure was unbearable... his breath was strangling in his throat. Then two hideous eyes... something out of a nightmare... moved close to Henderson's face, and a grotesque mouth opened ominously...

A blinding pain rocketed through his body and Henderson blanked-out. When he came-to, he seemed to be floating semi-consciously through a haze of indescribable agony. With horror that almost made his heart stop beating, he saw what had happened to make him faint. His left leg had been torn from his body... and now a savage tentacle was closing around his other leg.

Henderson felt a tortuous wrenching and tearing... and he prayed for a quick death... prayed that this being devoured piece by piece would be over in another second...



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THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

NO! NO! Not again! I want DO it! I WANT! My readers were interested in answers to their long letter I was good enough to give you space to run two issues back! I gave you HALF MY COLUMN last issue! That's ENOUGH already! But YES! These were only the first two replies that came in! We've had THOUSANDS more! We've GOT to print more!—ed! And you'll only print the ones that agree with you, anyway! (No, YES! We've got THREE that agree with Mrs. Flecken!—ed! YOU HAVE! (Burr! Do we'll even print those FIRST!—ed! And you'll give me what you promised! (I'll we can locate one!—ed! Oh, Goody! A brand new BLADE for my GUESSING! The old one's all covered from blood! I MUST remember to clean THIS one every time I use it.

Dear Editors *

I heartily agree with Mrs. Flecken in calling your magazine dirt and filth. As to their being shameful! I don't think you could possibly deny this.—E. Manning—N.Y.C.

I agree with Mrs. Flecken strongly. I do not think that you live up to your trademark, but I have hardly been "entertained" by your comics. I am sure that you'd be able to make ample money by selling stories according to the "League of Decency"—R.G. Hagani—(no address given).

I realize it's a million dollar business robbing candy from babies. We can't make people stop reading the trash, but if it wasn't published then they wouldn't have to. There are so many scary cat stories that could be published. I can't understand how you sleep nights thinking of how you jump children's cat cart pieces from them by feeding them little goods with these horrible stories.—Mrs. R.E. Colgan—San Francisco, Calif.

I wonder—where's a good publisher publisher reader? (Hold on a minute, YES! There're more letters from you who do NOT agree with Mrs. Arthur Grawdon Flecken of Kansas City!—ed!)

That letter from Mrs. Flecken was enough to make anyone respectable.—Mrs. Lorraine F. White—Minneapolis, Tenn.

If Mrs. Flecken had read some of your wit (never she would have noticed that you received letters from boys in Korea who are accusing you then to keep her safe and sound in her home so she can look her children to read magazines that explain the truth and hell at war.—Dorothy E. Pasholsky—St. Clair, Pa.

Mrs. Flecken's complaint must have shaken their heads after reading their latest issue at the Vault of Horror! Thank the Lord my mother is more broad-minded. She hasn't even heard what her next issue.—Johnny Emery—Newport Hill, Ohio.

This woman from Kansas states that your "trash" will not only warp little readers' mind, but turn him into a juvenile delinquent. Was she ever very low a criminal made in one of your stories? He is either led away in a crime moment or deceived by some strange and heinous overture, or worse! If this letterer has son's hopes to be a delinquent then her reasoning parents

need more fast re-reading!—C. Penning—Orange, N.J.

She says that only a "low type person" could derive any enjoyment from that trash. In that case, I guess my mother and father, my brothers and sister, and all of my relatives are low type persons, for we all enjoy your "shameful, heinous, and disgusting" magazines.—Nadth Trapp—Johnson City, N.Y.

The last I can say is that Mrs. Flecken is being rather unfair and very accurate.—Mary Margaret Lye—Carlsbad, Mo.

She probably just wanted to get her name into an E.C. mag.—Bob Neapengraver—Kansas City, Mo.

I am in favor of giving Mary Flecken and abolishing the Fleckens.—D.G. MacLarty—Beltsville, Md.

She can jump jump in the lake.—Mandy Myers—(no address given).

She has rocks in her head.—Ralph Jackson—Chicago, Ill.

She can go fly a kite!—Doctor M. Corbin—Laredo, Texas.

I think Mrs. Flecken is a little off her roller.—John Conner—(no address given).

She's a screwball.—George Rammage—Green City, Mo.

I have two children eight and three years old. They won't do it but worse than just read horror stories.—Mrs. L. Colman—Gallego, Mo.

I think you should let Mrs. Flecken know that the boys who taught her French and left about and legs slightly to the left is not up to her whether your books should be outlawed. Clear hell the publishers of McGraw-Hill and Weyland have read them. I think she has a nerve.—Mrs. F.E. Nelson—Richmond, Va.

How about DIED MUMMY DUST! Will THAT catch a publisher's eye? OCH, VERY cool!—ed! Are you sure though? Can I have my column back? (Sure, YES! Take it away!—ed! Well, THANKS! It's about PASTEL-COLORED ANEMIC VAMPIRES! There's hardly any column left to take away! OCH, there's enough to convince that E.C. is a several several TALES OF THE PASTEL category is still available. containing 128 pages of great entertainment for \$5! And there's enough room to convince that the sets of five by seven color-illustrated photographs reproductions of you G.E. and O.W. are still \$5!—also that subscriptions are available! 75¢—our prices came in developed—and! Highway robbery overpaid don't waste your money!

Mail wanted money, influence, complaints, suggestions, picture orders, T. of T. orders, and subscription orders with your clearly printed name and address to:

The Vault-Keeper
Room 764, Dept. 17
215 Leisure St.
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

YOU MIGHT SAY THAT THIS TERROR-TALE IS STRICTLY FROM HUNGER!



YOU SURE, PHIL?
YOU SURE IT'S
IN THERE?

I SEEN IT, I TELL YUH!
I SEEN IT SO AN' IT WAS
HORRIBLE... HORRIBLE!

S'MON! LET'S
GO IN AND
GET IT!

NO! WAIT! DON'T
GO IN THERE!
IT WON'T DO ANY
GOOD! LISTEN
TO ME!

THE POSSE STOOD BEFORE THE CAVE ENTRANCE, THEIR
BUNS LEVELLED AT ITS TAWNY BLACK MOUTH...

WE GOTTA GET IT, DOC...
WHATEVER IT IS! IT'S
KILLED TEN TOWNFOLK
ALREADY... STRIPPED 'EM
OF THEIR FLESH! PHIL'S
THE FIRST GUY WHAT'S
SEEN IT...

THAT'S RIGHT,
DOC! I FOL-
LOWED IT! IT
CAME FROM
PETE FEELEY'S
PLACE! PROBA-
BLY GOT HIM,
YOO!

I
SAW
IT
BEFORE
YOU
DID,
PHIL...
A LONG
TIME
BEFORE.



WHY? THEN WHY
DIDN'T YOU SAY
SOMETHING, DOC?
WHY DIDN'T YOU
TIP US OFF?

FEAR! YOU
MIGHT'VE
SAVED SOME
LIVES...

... BECAUSE
WHEN I SAW
IT, IT WASN'T
WHAT IT IS
TODAY!





YOU BETTER START
TALKIN' OGG! AN'
TALK FAST!

FIRST DO WHAT I SAY!
THEN I'LL TELL YOU
'BOUT IT! QUICK! GET A
FINE BUILT! A BIG ONE!



SOON, A CRACKLING FIRE CARGED BEFORE THE GAYE
EXTRANGE! THE PORSE MEMBERS STOOD AROUND OGG
CHAMBERS, BLARING AT HIM ANGRY!

OGG, OGG! THERE'S
YOUR FINE! NOW
GET ON WITH IT!
IT'S BEFFIN'
DARK!

YOU SAY YOU FOLLOWED
IT FROM PETE FEELEY'S
PLACE... ER, PHIL?

THAT'S
RIGHT!
I WAS
COMIN'
ACROSS
THE
VALLEY...



DID YOU
SEE
PETE?

SHURE. NO! WHEN
THE THING CAME OUT
OF HIS CABIN, I HIGH-
TAILED AFTER IT! I
KNEW IT MUST'VE BEEN
WHAT'S BEEN GOIN'
THE FLESH'S BOUND
THESE PARTS!



THEN YOU DUMB!
SEE PETE HAVE
ANY OF YOU
SEEN PETE
FEELEY SINCE
HE BECAME A
RECLUSE?

WHY, NO!
I AIN'T
LAID
EYES
ON 'IM!

BEEN
OWN
A
FEAR
NOW!



OGG! YOU TRYIN'
T' TELL US THAT...
THAT THING
IN THERE IS PETE
FEELEY? LONG!
THAT AIN'T
NOTHIN' HUMAN!

NO! THAT
ISN'T PETE
FEELEY!
NOT
ACTUAL!
YOU SEE...



'YOU SEE, PETE CAME TO ME MORE'N A YEAR AGO!
HE WAS SCARED! HE SHOWED ME THIS LUMP ON HIS
ARM!'

WHAT IS IT, OGG?
IT'S... IT'S GETTIN'
BIGGER EVERY
DAY!

LOOKS LIKE A TUMOR TIME,
PETE! A... A CANCER!



'PETE TURNED WHITE AS A GHOST! HE GOT REAL
SCARED...'

A... A CANCER? AN I
GONNA DIE, OGG?

OGGNO, PETE! DURNO. FOR
SURE! THERE'S TWO KINDS
OF TUMORS! ONE'S MALIGNANT,
IT'S BAD! THE OTHERS BENEIGN,
IT'S GOOD! THE MALIGNANT
ONE KEEPS GROWIN' TILL IT
KILLS YOU! 'TAIN'T NO USE
MEMORIN' IT! THE BENEIGN ONE
CAN BE CUT AWAY, AND THAT'S
THE LAST OF IT!



WHICH ONE'S THIS, DOG?
WHICH ONE?

DUNNO, PETE!
I'LL HAVE TO
TAKE SOME
TESTS! SPINAL
TAP! BLOOD
SAMPLE!



I SENT A SAMPLE OF PETE'S
BLOOD AND A SPINAL TAP TO A
BIG LAB IN CHATTANOOGA, AND
THEY TEL' ME...

SORRY, PETE!
WON'T DO YOU
NO GOOD
CUTTIN' THIS
TUMOR AWAY!
IT'S MALIGNANT!

THEN THEN
I'M SORRY
DIE?



EVEN IN THE SHORT TIME IT TOOK
TO GET BACK THE LAB REPORT,
PETE'S TUMOR HAD GROWN!

YEP! I'M AFRAID
SO, PETE! I'D SAY,
TWO MAYBE
THREE MONTHS.

NO! NO!
I OOH! MORTA
DIE! I'M
SCARED O'
DYN! I... SOB.
I...

PETE STARTED BLUBBERIN' LIKE A BABY! HE REALLY
HAD SCARED O' DYIN'! AN' THERE WAS NOthin' I
COULD DO...



TAKE IT EASY, PETE!
THESE THINGS HAPPEN!
WE JUS' GOTTA
FACE 'EM!

NO! NO! I'LL GO
TO BALD MOUNTAIN!
I'LL SEE THE OLD
HAB! I DON'
WANTA DIE!

THE FIRE FLICKERED BEFORE THE CAVE ENTRANCE!
THE POSSE STOOD AROUND, STARING AT OLD DOC
CHAMBERS...



YOU HEAR THAT'S
WHY WE AIN'T SEEN
PETE PERHAPS? 'CAUSE
HE DIED?

NO! PETE DON'T
DIE! HE OID WHAT
HE SWORE! HE
WENT UP TO
OLD BALDY, TO
THE HAB.

THAT
PHONY!
WHAT
COULD
SHE
DO?

THAT'S HOW I FELT! WHAT COULD SHE DO? SO I
WENT TO SEE PETE A COUPLE OF MONTHS LATER. IT
WAS HORRIBLE! HIS ARM HAD ALL BUT BEEN SWAL-
LOWED UP BY THAT AWFUL TUMOROUS GROWTH! BY ALL
RIGHTS HE SHOULD'VE BEEN ON HIS LAST LEGS...



IT'S THE OLD HAB... UP
ON OLD BALDY, DOG!
SHE SAID I AIN'T
SORRY DIE! SHE
PROMISED! HE
MADE A DEAL!

IT'S... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
THAT TUMOR SHOULD
HAVE KILLED YOU
LONG AGO!

PETE'D GONE TO SEE HER! HE'D BEGGED HER TO
HEX HIM SO'S HE WOULDN'T DIE! SHE'D REFUSED!
BUT HE'D PLEDGED UNTIL...



IF I DO IT... IF I HEX
FOD SO'S YOU'LL
NEVER DIE... WILL YOU
MAKE A PROMISE TO
ME? EH? HEE, HEE!

ANYTHING! ANYTHING
AT ALL!

PROMISE ME YOU'LL NEVER
ASK ME TO BREAK THE
HEX! PROMISE ME YOU'LL
NEVER COME BACK TO OLD
BALDY! REC, REC! PROMISE!

I PROMISE! I
SWEAR IT! ANYTHING...
ONLY KEEP ME FROM
DYIN' I'M SCARED!



SO THE OLD MAN WENT THROUGH HER INCANTA-
TIONS AND BLACK ANTS JIBBERISH.



...AND PETE CAME
DOWN FROM BALD
MOUNTAIN. *NERD!*

GO ON!
YOU 'SPECT
US TO BELIEVE
THAT NONSENSE,
DOC?

IT'S TRUE! BY
ALL RIGHTS, HE
SHOULD HAVE
BEEN DEAD!

DID YOU SEE
PETE AGAIN
AFTER THAT,
DOC?

ONCE MORE! I WENT UP TO
HIS PLACE ABOUT FOUR
MONTHS AFTER HE'D FIRST
COME TO SEE ME! I EXPECTED
TO FIND HIS CORPSE...
NOTHIN' MORE!

AND
DID YOU?



'HE WAS STILL ALIVE!' BY THEN THE TUMOR'D
SPREAD TO HIS BODY! IT WAS AWFUL... PRISTEN-
ING! I'D NEVER SEEN ANYTHING SO GORY! AN I
GOT A STINGING STOMACH...

'LO, DOC? GUESS YOU NEVER
'SPECTED TO FIND ME
ALIVE!

W-HO? CHOKER'S...
DIDN'T!



'WE TALKED FOR A WHILE,' HE COMPLAINED.

THE ONLY THING IS
I'M HUNGRY ALL THE
TIME! I KEEP EATIN'
LIKE A PIG!

YOU YOU NEED THE
NOURISHMENT!





ALL EYES TURNED TOWARD THE CAVE MOUTH... TOWARD THE SUCKING GULPING SOUND! THE FIRELIGHT DANCED ON ITS LIVED SHIMMERING FORM AS IT SLITHERED OUT... A HUGE RIDE OF GARGOLUS PROTOPLASM!

GOOD LORD!

YAAAAAAAHHH!

THEY BEGAN FIRING AT IT... PUMPHS BULLETS INTO ITS SLIMY ROLLING TESSERACTS.



DOC CHAMBERS PICKED UP A FLAMING FASCOT FROM THE FIRE.

BULLETS WON'T KILL IT! NOTHING WILL KILL IT! WE'LL HAVE TO DRIVE IT BACK INTO THE CAVE!

UMMM! WAN A TORCH... EVERYBODY!



THE HIDEOUS MASS OF DISEASED TISSUE RECOILED AS THE SEARING TORCHES WERE FLUNG AT IT...



FINALLY IT SLITHERED BACK INTO THE CAVE.

NOW WHAT, DOC? WE'VE GOT TO BLOCK UP THE CAVE ENTRANCE! SINCE WE CAN'T KILL IT, WE'VE GOT TO IMPRISON IT! GET SOME DYNAMITE!

DAWN FOUND THE CAVE MOUTH SEALED.

JUST MAY NOBODY EVER UNCOVERS THIS ENTRANCE THAT'S ALL!

IT'S GOT TO STAY IN THERE FOREVER!



WELLEN! YES! THAT'S IT, FRIENDS! PETE PEELEY'S CANCER GROWTH IS STILL SLITHERING AROUND IN THAT BLOCKED-UP CAVE DOWN THERE IN THE GREAT SMOCKS! CARE TO GO PROSPECTIN' WITH ME SOMETIME? WE MIGHT DIG UP SOMETHIN'... SOME-THIN' MIGHTY HUNGRY! AND

NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE OLD WITCH FOR HER FAINT TALE! NO RIDDIN' THIS TIME! 'BYE, NOW!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YEA, IT'S YOUR FENDERER OF REVOLTING RECIPES, THE OLD WITCH, COOKING UP ANOTHER CREEPY CONCOCTION IN MY GRUDDY CAULDRON. SO COME ON INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR AND I'LL DISH OUT A PUTRID PORTION! THIS TIME, I'VE MIXED UP A MASTERPIECE OF HORRORITY! IT'S A DELIGHTFULLY DELICIOUS YARN I CALL...

A GRIM FAIRY TALE!



ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG AGO, THERE WAS A TINY KINGDOM! BUT THIS TINY KINGDOM WAS AN UNHAPPY TINY KINGDOM! FOR THIS PARTICULAR TINY KINGDOM WAS OVERRUN WITH RATS! IT WAS SO OVERRUN WITH RATS THAT THE PEOPLE OF THIS TINY KINGDOM HAD TO CARRY STICKS WHEN THEY WENT OUT OF THEIR HOUSES.

DADDY! I'M AFRAID OF THE RATS!

DON'T BE AFRAID OF THEM, MY SON! I WILL KEEP YOU FROM HARM!

THERE WERE ALL KINDS OF RATS!
THERE WERE *BROWN* RATS...

...AND *GREY* RATS...

AND *GREYISH-BROWN* RATS...

...AND *BROWNISH-GREY* RATS...



THEY INVADED THE *STREETS*...



THE *SHOPS*...



THE *HOUSES*...



THEY ATE THE PEOPLE'S *GARBAGE*...



...THE PEOPLE'S *FOOD*...



...THE *PEOPLE*!



FINALLY THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM COULDN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER! THEY DECIDED TO KILL OFF THE RAT POPULATION... DESTROY THEM! SO ONE DAY, THEY ALL ARMED THEMSELVES WITH STICKS... BROOMS... ANYTHING USABLE AS A WEAPON...

...AND THEY STARTED KILLING OFF THE RATS...



THEY KILLED OFF GREY RATS...

...AND BROWN RATS...

...AND GREEN-BROWN RATS...

...AND BROWNISH-GREY RATS...



THEY KILLED OFF THE RATS THAT INVADDED THE STREETS AND ATE THE PEOPLE'S GARBAGE...

...THE RATS THAT INVADDED THE SHOPS AND ATE THE PEOPLE'S FOOD...

...AND THE RATS THAT INVADDED THE HOUSES AND ATE THE PEOPLE...



NOW, IT SEEMS THAT THIS TINY KINGDOM WAS GOVERNED BY A POMPOUS KING AND HIS POMPOUS QUEEN...

THEY LIVED IN A POMPOUS CASTLE SURROUNDED BY A POMPOUS MOAT...



GRAY RATS COULDN'T CROSS THE MOAT...

BROWN RATS COULDN'T CROSS THE MOAT...

GREYISH-BROWN RATS COULDN'T CROSS THE MOAT...

AND NEITHER COULD BROWNISH-GRAY RATS CROSS THE MOAT!



SO THE POMPOUS KING AND THE POMPOUS QUEEN IN THEIR POMPOUS CASTLE SURROUNDED BY THE POMPOUS MOAT HAD NO RAT PROBLEM! IN FACT, THE ONLY PROBLEM THE POMPOUS QUEEN HAD WAS WHAT TO DO NEXT FOR HER LITTLE PET WHITE MICE...

AREN'T THEY CUTE, SIERFRIED? I HAD THOSE DIAMOND COLLARS MADE SPECIAL... JUST FOR THEM!

VERY CUTE, OVERDOLPH!



THE POMPOUS QUEEN LOVED HER PET WHITE MICE! SHE KEPT THEM IN A DIAMOND STUDDED GOLD CAGE... SHE FED THEM FROM A DIAMOND STUDDED GOLD FEEDING TRAY... SHE ORESSED THEM IN DIAMOND STUDDED GOLD COLLARS! THERE WASN'T ANYTHING THOSE LITTLE WHITE MICE LACKED...

GOOCHME...GOOCHME, YOU LITTLE OVERDOLPH! DARLINGS! HERE, SWEETS! SOME ROAST PEARANT...



AND THEN, ONE DAY, THE POMPOUS KING AND THE POMPOUS QUEEN LEARNED FROM THEIR POMPOUS LORD HIGH ADVISOR AND LEGAL-EAGLE THAT THE POPULACE HAD ALMOST COME OVER THE RAT SITUATION.

THEY ARE KILLING THEM OFF WITH THEIR BARE HANDS! IT'S AMAZING!

AMAZING!

NO! NO! THEY MUSTN'T!

WHY NOT, GWENDOLYN, DEAR? THE RATS ARE A PROBLEM!

RATS ARE RELATED TO WIFE, SIEGFRIED! I LOVE MY WHITE WIFE! SO I LOVE THEIR GODSIBS, TOO! I FORBID THE PEOPLE TO KILL THE RATS! IT'S CRUEL... I FORBID IT!



AND SO AN EDICT WAS READ ALL OVER THE TINY KINGDOM...

THEREFORE, BY ORDER OF QUEEN GWENDOLYN AND KING SIEGFRIED, IT IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE TO KILL, MUTILATE, HARM, OR ANNOY ANY RAT IN THIS KINGDOM! VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED! PUNISHABLE BY A FINE, IMPRISONMENT...OR BOTH! ARTICLE 88, SECTION 8, PENAL LAW, KINGDOM OF...

...THE KILLING OF THE RATS WAS HALTED! SOON, THEY ONCE AGAIN BEGAN TO OVERRUN THE TINY KINGDOM.

ONCE AGAIN THEY BEGAN TO EAT THE PEOPLE'S GARBAGE...



...THE PEOPLE'S FOOD...



...AND THE PEOPLE?



EEEEEEEEEEEEEE...

MY BABY!

AND ONCE AGAIN, THE PEOPLE COULD STAND IT NO LONGER! BUT THIS TIME THEY WEREN'T ALLOWED TO KILL THE RATS...



WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

HE'S BEING TAKEN TO PRISON!

HE KILLED A RAT!

AND THE RAT SITUATION GOT WORSE THAN EVER...

WE'RE STARVING!

THE RATS EAT ALL THE FOOD...

THE KING AND QUEEN WON'T LET US KILL THE RATS!

THEY LOVE RATS!



AND THE PEOPLE GOT ANGRIER AND ANGRIER...



WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!

FOLLOW ME!

TO THE CASTLE!

THE CROWD GREW LARGER AS IT MOVED THROUGH THE STREETS...



TO THE CASTLE...

TO THE RAT LOVERS!

OH NO!

...THE PEOPLE WERE SHOUTING AND YELLING AS THEY NEARED THE CASTLE...



SOMEONE OPEN THE DOOR AND LET THE DRAUGHTS DOWN, AND THE CROWD STAMPED AHEAD...



THE POMPOUS KING AND THE POMPOUS QUEEN WERE SURROUNDED IN THEIR POMPOUS THRONE-ROOM BY THE ANGRY MOB...

GO HOME! GO BACK TO YOUR HOUSES!

SEIZE THEM!



THE ANGRY CROWD SEIZED THE POMPOUS KING AND THE POMPOUS QUEEN...

STOP! STOP! EEEEEEE! (BAINING THE RATS!)

SOMEONE CAME FORWARD WITH A CASE! INSIDE WERE TWO HALF-STARVED VICTIM-LOOKING RATS.

HERE! HERE THEY ARE!



ONE LIVE RAT WAS FORCED INTO THE POMPOUS KING'S MOUTH...

...AND DOWN HIS THROAT! THE OTHER RAT WAS FORCED INTO THE POMPOUS QUEEN'S MOUTH...



...AND DOWN HER THROAT! THEN THEIR POMPOUS ROYAL MOUTHS WERE SEWN SHUT.



AND THE CROWD CHEERED AS LITTLE BY LITTLE THE HUNGRY HALF-STARVED RATS ATE THEIR WAY OUT OF THE POMPOUS KING AND THE POMPOUS QUEEN.



AFTER THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE TINY KINGDOM KILLED OFF THE OTHER RATS AND LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER! YEE HEE! WELL, KIDDIES! THAT'S MY FAIRY TALE... AND IT WAS AS I SAID: PRETTY DUMB, EH? SO, THAT KINGS UP THE NIGHT-KEEPER'S MAG FOR THIS ISSUE! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, THE HAUNT OF FEAR! BYE NOW! REMEMBER! IF YOU DON'T LIKE RATS, AND WHAT HAPPENED TO GWYNETH AND SIGGY. KEEP YOUR TRAP SHUT! YEE HEE!



Super POWERFUL!



LONG RANGE

MADE BY **GERMAN ARTISANS**

ONLY \$ **3.00**
NOT \$10.00

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AN EXTRA GIFT TO YOU
A MAGNIFICENT SURPRISE PRIZEGIFT
GIVEN WITH EVERY PAIR OF
BLANDYNS. Now it's guaranteed and
redeemed! We do this to win you, as
a kind and honest and customer. Tell
your friends about us. This gift is
ours to help always, even if you
believe the BLANDYNS for full
value. Put your trust in this friendly
company. Thank you very much!

- 3 x 40 mm. Power
Lenses
- Sharp Clear Views
- Smart, Modern Design
- Control-Focusing Wheel
- Big Size and Big Power
- Satisfaction
Guaranteed

SEND NO MONEY - Try at our risk!

Here's a GIFTING suggestion for you. Compare with domestic
binoculars selling up to \$2.00 for cheap, light weight and
rapid construction and look into them now and you'll be con-
vinced of their quality. You will be looking with the BLANDYNS
BLANDYNS. Now they cost you 100¢ and, wonder-of-wonders! It's a
whole lot of new and sharp, brilliant detail. Search for
CHARACTER. Notice focusing mechanism gives you swift, easy
adjustments. Good weight - easy to carry with you - yet they
are as STURDYLY made that it is actually IMPROVED TO 100%
100% in normal use! Yes, this is what you have always wanted
now years of an understanding LOOK INTO - what they feel!

BIG SIZE - BIG POWER - BIG VALUE

Please do not confuse the BLANDYNS with cheaply made Binoc-
ulars commonly sold. BLANDYNS are made in the U.S.A. and are
made by GERMAN ARTISANS. You receive BIG POWER, BIG SIZE
and a BIG, LUSTY, BRIGHT!

A LIFETIME OF THRILLS AWAITS YOU!

With you too this most desired, delicious, delicious world to
visit, enjoy the world. Have a "trip" to all of beauty
Hawaii, Japan, Australia or Europe! You get an intimate view
of nature. The life of the world. Pleasant sounds, birds and with an
extra, almost magic, landscape views, etc. You see what your
imagination can bring. Carry them along along. Carry them with you
on looking into the!

FREE TRIAL OFFER - ENJOY AT OUR RISK!

We want to send you a pair of these super-power glasses for you
to examine and enjoy for 100% BLANDYNS - without obligation.

You have no chance. Test them - use them as you like. Compare them
for value and weight with BLANDYNS selling up to \$2.00. Then you
for yourself if you're not satisfied, then return and get your money back!
Don't send one. PLEASE - pay nothing only 3.00 plus freight on arrival.
Do it today - WHILE SUPPLY LASTS, 200! That's the fun and thrill of the
day. That's the thrill, COME RIGHT NOW.

MAIL COUPON FOR HOME TRIAL!

CONSUMERS MART, Dept. 38-K-134

131 West 32nd Street New York 1, N. Y.

SEND NO MONEY! Send your guaranteed BLANDYNS. Super Power Lens
Glasses for a whole week's home trial - FREE! In addition and your
GIFT! (BLANDYNS 2x) 1 mail pay postage 3.00 plus postage on
arrival. I shall enjoy them, and use them for a whole week, and if
not satisfied with this leading bargain, you can to send me 3.00 back.
The surprise Prizegift Gift is yours to help you if I return the
BLANDYNS!

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____
ZIP _____
[] EXTRA SAVINGS FOR YOU! Save 3.00 each, check at money order
with this coupon and we pay ALL POSTAGE, CREDIT, TRAIL, MONEY-BACK
GUARANTEE!

Then 15" tall
SILVER TROPHY
JUST IN 100 IN
10 MINUTES
OF FUN
A DAY

**I GAINED
53 LBS. OF SHAPELY
POWER-PACKED
MUSCLES**

2 ME'S
is **YOU** ?

THAT 112 LB.-6 FT.
SPINDLE-ARMED **SISSY** WAS HERE
A FEW SHORT WEEKS AGO

THIS MAY BE
YOUR LAST
SALVANCE

CHANDLER
1900-1901

115 100

10

[illegible]

WILLIAMS

WILEY

NO! friend you
don't have to be
SKINNY any more
just mail **NOW**
the **FREE**
coupon below
as I did. Soon
YOU can add

6½ inches to your CHEST
3 inches to each ARM 

and the rest
is proportion
rest as I did.

[illegible]

CHES

Where the Board has not yet made a decision, the Board will be asked to make a decision on the proposed action.

1. **THEORY**

BACK

GRIP

FOR THE RECORD
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**Come on, PAL, NOW
YOU GIVE ME**

10 PLEASANT MINUTES A DAY IN YOUR HOME... AND I'LL GIVE YOU A NEW HE-MAN BODY FOR YOUR OLD SKELETON FRAME.

1995 **George W. Jernstedt** *World's Greatest Building of 1995*

NO! I don't care how skinny or fat you are, if you're sane—over, in your 20's or 30's or over, if you're short or tall, or what work you do. All I want is JUST to EXCITE MYSELF in your hands to MAKE YOU DRIVE up the SAME HIGHWAY I turned myself from a wreck by a Christian of Churches.

ROGER HIRSCH
was a 112 lb. d.b. WRECKING
Look at him NOW—
A MOVIE-STAR HE ISN'T

as **YOU**
can be
seen.

YES! You'll see PROS come FROM YOUR ARMS! Your DRUGS SHEDDING themselves. From head to SOLE. POWER. SPEED! You'll become all-meat, a Predator in everything you want you are military need.

Develop YOUR 520 MUSCLES
Gain Pounds, INCHES, FAST!

Friend, You traveled the world. Made a LIFETIME STORY of "My way
DOWN TO JAMBOO YOUR WAY. Then I decided the BEST by THIS, my
"I-MAN PROGRESSIVE POWER" the only method that lasts you forever!
But You save THOUS. DOLLARS (the movie also You Told me I'm
cheap) Naga! Naga! Naga! I'm MANY THOUSANDS (the you that SO Mail
me) (1997)

BOTH FREE FOR QUICK ACTION!

7. Photo Book of STRONG MEN

7. **BUCKET OF METE**

2000

1. **Project Name:** [Project Name]
 2. **Project Manager:** [Project Manager]
 3. **Project Sponsor:** [Project Sponsor]
 4. **Project Start Date:** [Project Start Date]
 5. **Project End Date:** [Project End Date]
 6. **Project Budget:** [Project Budget]
 7. **Project Status:** [Project Status]
 8. **Project Description:** [Project Description]

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1. The first step is to identify the problem. This involves understanding the current situation and what needs to be improved.

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- BROODING BEHAVIOR paid for itself on the first 2 years, and saved the valuable fish by eliminating juveniles.
- W. SCOTT, JR., Ed.

It's Done, Feb. 10, 1935.—Fixed another weather machine and worked on ball in day. With your interest I did it in 10 minutes.



SALE! COME ON! BUY! FOR 3-DAY FREE TRIAL!

11/11/2019 11:11:11 AM

Dec. 30-2. 1894. New York, N. Y.

How do the new cell phone networks from Sprint, Verizon, and others compare?

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THE VAULT OF HORROR®

FEATURING



THE OLD PITCH



THE OLD PITCH



THE CRY-KEEPER



THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! THE DOORS TO THE VAULT OF HORROR ARE OPEN. FINGERS! WON'T YOU COME IN? I AM YOUR HOST, THE VAULT KEEPER, AND I REALLY HAVE A *POOR* STORY FOR YOU! IT ACTUALLY *SMELLS*! BUT YOU'LL *ENJOY* IT... SO IF YOU WISH, PUT A CLOTHESPIN ON YOUR NOSE OR DON YOUR *BAD-MASK*, AND I'LL BEGIN! HEH, HEH! WHEN I'M *FINISHED*, YOU'LL KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN... FOR EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU IS GOING TO *LIVE* THE TALE CALLED...

TILL DEATH...



YOU STAND ON THE END OF THE PIER, STARRING AWKWARDLY OUT OVER THE GLITTERING, RESTLESS WATERS OF THE CARIBBEAN SEA. YOU WIPPE THE PERSPIRATION FROM YOUR FOREHEAD... AND THEN, SUDDENLY, YOUR HEART SKIPS A BEAT! YOU SEE IT! JUST A DOT ON THE HORIZON... A *SHIP*!



YOU'VE WAITED TWO YEARS FOR THIS SHIP! FOR TWO LONG, BACK-BREAKING YEARS YOU'VE DREAMED TO BUILD YOUR SUGAR PLANTATION SO THAT IT WOULD BE FIT FOR A WOMAN TO LIVE ON! AND NOW THE SPECIAL DAY HAS ARRIVED... FOR THIS SHIP IS BRINGING YOU YOUR FUTURE WIFE...



YOUR DAYS OF WAITING ARE ENDED! THE 'GIRL BACK HOME' HAS COME TO MARRY YOU... AND MANY HOURS LATER YOU ARRIVE AT YOUR PLANTATION DEEP IN THE JUNGLE...DEEP IN THE JUNGLE OF RAITI...



THE NEXT FEW MONTHS ARE PURE BLISS! DONNA WAKES YOU WITH A KISS EACH MORNING...



SHE PREPARES YOUR MEALS AND SERVES YOU FAITHFULLY LONGMAY BY HER PRESENCE SHE TURNS THE BRIDGING 100000 ISLAND OF RAITI INTO A BEAUTIFUL ISLE OF ROMANCE AND LOVE...



THE SHIP SLIDES INTO ITS BERTH AND THE GANG-PLANK IS LOWERED! TOURISTS SWARM ONTO THE PIER TO BE SWALLOWED BY THE BUSTLING DOORSIDE ACTIVITY! AND THEN...YOU SEE HER...



YOU'RE PROUD AS A KING! THE MINISTER PERFORMS A SIMPLE CEREMONY...AND THE FEAST BEGINS! THE NATIVES CHANT AND BEAT THE DRUMS...DANCING, LAUGHING, SINGING IS THEIR HAPPINESS...



SHE'S BY YOUR SIDE CONSTANTLY, SHOWERING YOU WITH HER LOVE AND DEVOTION! NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO, SHE IS BY YOUR SIDE! YOUR HAPPINESS IS COMPLETE!



BUT ONE DAY, AS YOU STROLL WITH HER ABOUT THE PLANTATION, HER STEPS HALTER... SHE GRIPS YOUR ARM!



CONNIE! WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU LOOK SO PALE!

DARLING, I... FEEL Faint! HELP ME, STEVE! TAKE ME BACK... BACK TO THE HOUSE...

THROUGH THE LONG, ANXIOUS HOURS OF THE NIGHT, YOU KNEEL BESIDE HER, PRAYING PERVENTLY IN THE MORNING, THE TANNER RETURNS WITH THE DOCTOR...



I'M AFRAID IT'S TOO LATE! SHE'S DEAD!

IT'S WHAT I EXPECTED! IT'S ALWAYS TOO LATE!

YOUR LIFE IS EMPTY NOW! NIGHTS ARE FILLED WITH AGONIZING DREAMS OF MEMORIES! THERE'S NO ONE TO KISS YOU AWAKE IN THE MORNING...



JESUS TRIES HARD TO TAKE HER PLACE? HE SERVES YOUR MEALS AS SHE USED TO... HE STAYS WITH YOU ALWAYS! IT HURTS HIM TO SEE YOU SO SAD...



QUICKLY, YOU LIFT HER IN YOUR ARMS AND CARRY HER TO THE HOUSE? A RUNNER IS SENT TO FETCH A DOCTOR... BUT YOU KNOW IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD!



MISSY DONNA GET HELP! BAD JUNGLE FEVER, I'NNNA STEVE!

I... I KNOW, JESUS! SHE'S GOING TO DIE! NO ONE EVER LIVES THROUGH IT!

THE NEXT DAY, YOU BURY HER! THE LONG, SILENT PROCESSION CLIMBS TO THE TOP OF A HILL WHERE THE TANNING GRAVE WAITS! THROUGH THE TRACKLESS JUNGLE, DRUMS RESOUND! THE ENCHANTED ISLE OF ROMANCE HAS RETURNED TO ITS FORMER EVIL SELF!



BUT IT'S NOT THE SAME! NOTHING IS THE SAME! IT CAN NEVER BE THE WAY IT ONCE WAS! CONNIE HAS CAST THE SPELL TO CHANGE THINGS...



IF ONLY, YOU
SIDE IN HEART
SINCE MISSY
DONNA. SO
'WY! YOU
LIKE MERRIE
HAVE HER
BACK, YES?



JERCO. I'D DO
ANYTHING
TO HAVE HER
WITH ME AGAIN!
SHE WAS MY
WHOLE LIFE!

YOU GET HER
BACK, YOU LIKE
MERRIE KEEP
HER ALL TIME.
YES?



I'D OUTLET
HER OUT OF MY
SIGHT, JERCO!
I'D KEEP HER.
AND LOVE HER
FOREVER!

THAT RIGHT YOU DRINK HEAVILY...
YOU WANT TO DEATHEN YOUR
SENSES TO THE REALITIES YOU
DREAD! BUT IN YOUR SACCO-
SSIONS, YOU HEAR THE
POOOO OOOO...



UNKNOWN TO YOU, YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANT JERCO
HAS REMOVED YOUR WIFE FROM HER GRAVE AND
CARRIED HER INTO THE JUNGLE! THERE, SURROUNDED
BY THE FRENZIED, CHANTING WORSHIPPERS! A DOOOO
RITUAL IS PERFORMED



THE WHIRLING HYSTERICAL NATIVES LEAP AND
DANCE THROUGH THE FLAMES, NERVENIZED BY
THE EAR-SHATTERING THUNDER OF THE DRUMS!
FAR INTO THE NIGHT THE HIGH PRIESTESS
DYRATES SPASMODICALLY BEFORE THE CONGE
TIED TO A POLE IN THE CENTER OF THE FIRE
RING! AND SUDDENLY... DONNA MOVES!



IMMEDIATELY, HER
FINGERS ARE SEVERED!
HER FINGERS AND
ARMS TWITCH! HER
HEAD TURNS SLOWLY,
AND HER EYES ARE
OPEN- GLASSY AND
TRANCE-LIKE! SHE
IS A MEMBER OF
THE LIVING DEAD!
A ZOMBIE!

ZOMBIE
Ze



AND THE NEXT MORNING... YOU ARE WAKENED WITH
A KISS!



ONCE AGAIN THE WORLD ABOUT YOU IS CHANGED!
ONCE MORE YOU FEEL ALIVE AND HAPPY, CONTENT
WITH EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE! LIFE IS
BEAUTIFUL!



YOU STROLL ARM IN ARM, AND THE NATIVES GEM IN
THEIR APPROVAL OF YOUR JOY! YOU ARE
SUPREMACY HAPPY...



YES...SUPREMACY HAPPY! FOR
A FEW DAYS! BECAUSE SLOWLY
YOU BECOME AWARE OF SOME-
THING...



(GUFFY) PLEASE! DONNA, DON'T
YOU THINK YOU OUGHT TO
TAKE A BATH?

A BATH HELPS...A LITTLE! BUT
AN HOUR LATER...



PLEASE! DONNA,
PLEASE! TAKE
ANOTHER BATH!

THEN WITH A SHOCK, YOU REALIZE...

MY GOSH! LATHS WON'T STOP
HER GOOD! SHE'S DEAD! SHE'S...
SHE'S STARTING TO DECAY!



THE SHELTERING DAYS PASS, AND DONNA'S CONDI-
TION CONSTANTLY GETS WORSE! HER SKIN BEGINS TO
ROT AND DROP FROM HER BONES! YOU TRY TO ESCAPE
FROM HER... BUT SHE RICHES WITH YOU...



DONNA, PLEASE! LEAVE
ME ALONE JUST FOR A LITTLE
WHILE! PLEASE! (CHOKES!)

HER ENTIRE EXISTENCE IS NOW! SHE STAYS BY YOUR
SIDE DAY AND NIGHT, CLINGING TIGHTLY TO YOUR
ARM! AND IN THE MORNING...



NO! NO! DON'T KISS ME!
I'M AWAKE! I'M AWAKE!

DAYS PASS INTO WEEKS! YOU'RE NAUSEOUS ALL THE TIME NOW! SO YOU STOP EATING! THE PUTRID ODOR SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE AND FLATULATION... BUT THE NATIVES AREN'T BOTHERED! YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE AFFECTED... AND YOU CAN'T STAND IT!



GET AWAY FROM ME, YOU FILTHY, ROTTEN THING! GET AWAY! PLEASE! PLEASE!!



IT'S NO USE... BULLETS WON'T STOP HER!



CUT YOU TO PIECES! CUT! CUT! I'LL GET RID OF YOU!



THAT WON'T STOP HER, EITHER! YOU ONLY MAKE HER LOOK WORSE!



... AND STRANGLING, HANGING OR DROWNING HAVE NO EFFECT WHATSOEVER...



YOU STINKING BLIMP THING! I'LL KILL YOU! KILL YOU!



Frustrated in your every attempt to escape the sickening sight and smell of your work, you finally tie her with rope and shove her into the helicopter you use to scout your game fields...



IF I PUSH HER OUT OVER THE JUNGLE, MAYBE SHE'LL JUST BREAK INTO PIECES WHEN SHE HITS THE GROUND! IT'S GOT TO WORK!

YOU FLY OVER THE DEEPEST PART OF THE JUNGLE! WITH A PRAYER ON YOUR LIPS...YOU OPEN THE DOOR... AND GRAB WITH YOUR FOOT!



YOU WATCH THE BODY PLUMMET DOWN AND DISAPPEAR INTO THE FOLIAGE BELOW! THEN YOU TURN AND GO BACK TO THE PLANTATION! THAT NIGHT YOU WAIT PATIENTLY...



THE MUSTN'T COME BACK! SHE MUSTN'T!

A DAY OR TWO PASS BY, AND YOU ARE BEGINNING TO FEEL MORE RELAXED! ALTHOUGH HER STENCH STILL IS IN THE HOUSE, YOUR RELIEF IS IMMENSE...



I'M FREE OF HER! I'LL... BE ABLE TO EAT AGAIN SOON!

BY THE NEXT EVENING YOU'RE FEELING QUITE WELL! YOU ARE A MAN! TODAY... AND IT STAYED DOWN! BUT JUST AS YOU'RE ABOUT TO RETIRE, JESCO ENTERS!



S'WANA! S'WANA STEVE! WASSA DOMMA! SHE COME BACK!

YOU RAGE MADLY OUT OF THE HOUSE! IT CAN'T BE TRUE! SHE CAN'T COME BACK! YOU STOP! THERE, STUMBLING BROKEQUICKLY ACROSS THE COMPOUND TOWARD YOU, IS THE ROTTED REMAINS OF WHAT ONCE WAS YOUR WIFE! YOU FEEL SICK.



YOU TURN SWIFTLY AND RACE PASS JESCO INTO THE HOUSE! IT'S THE END, NOW! YOU CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE! THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY LEFT!



THE MEDICINE CHEST! YOUR HANDS FUMBLE IN YOUR FRANTIC HASTE, BUT YOU FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR! IF YOU CAN'T DESTROY HER... YOU'VE GOT TO DESTROY YOURSELF! YOU OPEN THE BOTTLE MARKED 'POISON' AND DRINK!



THE PAIN IS STRONG! IT ACTS QUICKLY! YOU FEEL THE BURNING IN YOUR THROAT... YOUR SURROUNDINGS ARE GOING BLACK...



FOR A LONG WHILE YOU FIGHT IN A SEA OF DARKNESS... AND THEN, BIT BY BIT, YOU HEAR THE FAR AWAY SOUND OF THUNDER...



THE NOISE GROWS LOUDER AND CLEARER! YOU RECOGNIZE IT AS THE HUMMING OF DRUMS! YOU FEEL A GREAT HEAT... YOU TWITCH... AND OPEN YOUR EYES...



YOU SEE A GREAT WALL OF FIRE... AND HEAR THE MAD, FURIOUS SCREAMING OF HUNDREDS OF NATIVES! THE DRUMS POUND THROUGH YOUR HEAD AS YOU MOVE YOUR HAND! A NATIVE LEAPS THROUGH THE FLAMES AND SLASHES THE ROPES THAT BIND YOU...



DUMBLY, YOU TAKE A STEP FORWARD... AND A GREAT ROAR FILLS YOUR EARS! YOU WALK THROUGH THE CIRCLE OF LEAVING PLANKS... AND FEEL NOTHING! THEN, JESCO AND THE HIGH PRIESTESS CONFRONT YOU...



IS GOOD! A'WMA STEVE, BHI SAY BE WITH NISST DONNA ALL TIME!

A SILENT REALIZATION DAWNS UPON YOU! YOU DON'T FEEL PAIN WHEN YOU WALKED THROUGH THE FIRE! YOU FELT NOTHING THEN... YOU FEEL NOTHING NOW! YOU'RE A JOMINI! ONE OF THE LIVING DEAD! AND, AS JESCO SAID, YOU'LL BE WITH DONNA FOR ALL TIME NOW... FOREVER! LOOK OUT THERE SHE COMES...



HEH, HEH! AIN'T THAT SOMETHING? STEVE HAD FOTTER LOCK, DIDN'T HET I SUSSE DONNA DONNA KNOW ABOUT LIFEBODY! BUT NOW THAT STEVE'S A DOWIE, AT LEAST SHE HAS A DEADBODY! HEH, HEH, HEH! OR, I'M REALLY FIRED UP, EH? WASHITA HEAR, I'M JUST A DRUMMER, N' WELL, Z'Z'Z'



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HIGHLY! ONCE I SAW A SAW-MILL! AND I ADDED ANOTHER BLOOD-CURDLING TALE OF TERROR TO MY FANTASTIC COLLECTION HERE IN THE CRYPT! SO COME IN, FIENDS! COME IN BESIDE YOUR HORROR-HOST THE CRYPT-KEEPER! I'LL TELL 'E TO YOU... IF YOU WOODEN MIND! I CALL THIS SPINE-TINGLING YARN...

THE CHIPS ARE DOWN!



SHIMMONS DARTY LEANED OVER AND GRAPPED ON THE INSTRUMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE INSTRUMENT'S INSTANT BLUZZING! BEHIND HIM STOOD HIS PARTNERS, ADELL HENNING AND OLBERT FIELD...



HOW YOU'VE MET THE PLAYERS IN OUR LITTLE GAME OF DANCE, FRIEND! PARTNERS IN A SNAKE-BILL! LOOK FOR HOW THEIR STARES IN LIFE STACK UP EQUALLY! THIS ONE IS SIGMUND DARTBY'S! THE ONE IN THE MIDDLE... JAVELL HENNING'S! AND THE ONE ON THE RIGHT... GILBERT FIELD'S...



SOME OK, COLONEL! BUT DON'T THESE HAVE NO ASSOCIATES, MR. HENNING AND MR. FIELD?



A PLEASURE, COLONEL! GENTLEMON!

HOW DO, THE PLEASURE, COLONEL! LIFE IS DANDY, SIR!

GENTLEMEN? YOUR SNAKE-BILL HAS BEEN CHOSEN BY THE ARMY FOR A MONEY SECRET GOVERNMENT CONTRACT! WE KNOW YOUR RECORD! WE KNOW WHAT YOU CAN DO! I HAVE HERE THE SPECIFICATIONS OF WHAT THE ARMY NEEDS!



COLONEL TURNER SPREAD A BLUEPRINT OUT ON SIGMUND DARTBY'S DESK! THE THREE PARTNERS STARED AT IT FOR A MOMENT! THEN...

WHY, THIS LOOKS LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN A THIN WOODEN DISC, COLONEL!

EXACTLY, MR. HENNING! THAT'S ALL IT IS! WAPER THIN!

AND THIS IS THE HIGHEST SECRET PRODUCT!



IT IS? LET ME EXPLAIN! I CANNOT TELL YOU WHAT WE WILL DOSE THEM FOR, BUT THE ARMY WILL NEED SIXTY THOUSAND OF THESE DISCS PER MONTH! THEY MUST BE EXACTLY AS SPECIFIED... TWENTY-SEVEN INCHES IN DIAMETER AND THREE SIXTEENTHS OF AN INCH THICK!

SIXTY THOUSAND A MONTH?



THAT IS CORRECT, MR. FIELD! THEY MUST BE MADE OF OUSE, AND ENTIRELY FLAWLESS! WE WILL REJECT ALL THAT DO NOT MEET THE SPECIFICATIONS! THE CONTRACT READS THAT UPON DELIVERY, WE WILL PAY ONE DOLLAR AND SEVENTY FIVE CENTS EACH FOR THE DISCS!

COLONEL TURNER? WE WILL START SHIPPING IN TWO MONTHS...

AS SOON AS WE'VE INFORMED AND BUILT THE MACHINERY!

PERFECT! GOOD DAY, GENTLEMEN!

GOOD DAY, COLONEL!

GOOD DAY, SIR!

GOOD DAY, SIR!



NEH, NEH! NOTION, RIGGERS! LOOK
IS WITH OUR PLAYERS! THEIR
STAKES BLOW... LOGGALLY? SEE?
BUT NOW, LET US RETURN TO
THE S.M.F. S.A.F.-WILL AND
LISTEN AS THE PARTNERS
DISCUSS THE NEW GOVERN-
MENT CONTRACT...



HOW CAN WE TURN
THEM OUT, FIELD?
YOU'RE THE
ENGINEER! SIXTY THOUSAND
A MONTH! THAT'S
MORE THAN TWO
THOUSAND PER
PRODUCTION
DAY!



I'LL THINK
OF SOME-
THING, GENTLEMEN!
GIVE ME
TIME!



COULD WE CUT
DOWN OUR
FINGER INTO
QUARTER INCH
PLANKS AND
PUT THE
DISCS FROM
THAT?



WE COULD!
BUT IT
WOULD BE
COSTLY...
AND TAKE
TWO LONG!
NOW WE'VE GOT
TO THINK OF A
BETTER METHOD!



GENTLE-
MEN! WE
HAIN'T
HAD
LUNCH
YET!
SHALL
WE...



NO, HENNING! LET'S
HAVE OUR LUNCH SENT
IN TODAY! WE'VE GOT
A LOT OF FURNING
TO DO!



OH, LORD!
I HATE
SANDWICHES!



SANDWICHES?
THAT'S IT!



WHAT ABOUT SAND-
WICHES, FIELD?
WHAT'S IT?



SANDWICHES? BREAD
SLICES? THE WOODEN
DISCS ARE LIKE WHEAT
SLICES! NOW DO THEY
SLICE BREAD?



WHY, WITH
A KNIFE!



NO! NO! I MEAN
WHOLE LOAVES!
NOW DO THEY
SLICE WHOLE
LOAVES?



WITH A SLICING
MACHINE! A SERIES
OF DRIVES VIBRATING
AT HIGH SPEEDS!
CUTS THE WHOLE
LOAF INTO SLICES...



YES! AND A SERIES OF STRONG BUT
PAPER-THIN SAW BLADES, SPACED
THREE-SIXTENTHS OF AN INCH
APART, COULD CUT AN INCH
COLUMNS... TURNED DOWN TO TWENTY-SEVEN
HUNDRED IN DIAMETER... INTO
DISCS EXACTLY THE SIZE WE
NEED!



FIELD!
YOU'VE
GOT IT!
YOU'VE
GOT IT!



YES, DEAR BRAGGART! DELBERT FIELD DID HAVE IT! NOTICE HOW... HOW THAT THEIR BIGGEST PROBLEM IS SOLVED! NOW OUR THREE PLAYERS IN THE GAME OF LIFE HAVE ADDED TO THEIR ORIGINAL SPARES! THE STAKES ARE HIGHER... BUT SURE! LET'S LOOK IN ON THE O.M.F. SAW... WILL ABOUT ONE MONTH LATER...



WELL, GENTLEMEN! WHY DO YOU THINK OF THE MACHINE? IT IS COMPLETELY INSTALLED AND READY TO GO...

LOOKS GOOD TO ME, FIELD! IF IT WORKS...

LET'S TRY IT, FIELD! ALL RIGHT, BO! ROLL IN THE OAK COLUMN!



AN EIGHT-FOOT-LONG OAK COLUMN... THAT HAD BEEN CAREFULLY TURNED UNTIL IT MEASURED TWENTY-SEVEN INCHES IN DIAMETER ALONG ITS ENTIRE LENGTH... LIDDED DOWN THE GARTYON BELT AND ONTO THE GRABBLE OF THE GIANT SLICING MACHINE!



READY, MR. GARTYON?

START THE MACHINE, ED!

A SWITCH WAS THROWN! MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED SAW BLADES WITH TINY RAZOR-SHARP TEETH BEGAN TO VIBRATE...

IT'S MOVING! FIELD!

IT'S CUTTING THROUGH THE COLUMN AS IF IT WERE CREAM!

GENTLEMEN! THE MACHINE IS A SUCCESS! OUR GOVERNMENT CONTRACT WILL BE MET WITH EASE!



IN THIRTY MINUTES THE MACHINE HAD SLICED THROUGH THE OAK COLUMN, REDUCING IT TO A LITTLE OVER FIVE HUNDRED RAFFERTY-THIN WOODEN DISCS.



PERFECT! PERFECT! SEE HOW SMOOTH!

THAT'S BECAUSE WE RUN THE MACHINE SLOWLY! WE COULD PROBABLY GET THROUGH THE COLUMN IN FIVE MINUTES!

... BUT THE DISC SURFACES WOULD BE ROUGH!



FIND ONE HAS A KNOT HOLE!

NATURALLY! THERE WILL BE MANY WE'LL HAVE TO DISCARD! WOOD ALWAYS HAS SOME KNOT HOLES!

BUT, AT OVER FIVE HUNDRED EVERY THIRTY MINUTES OR THEREABOUTS... AND ALLOWING FOR THIRTY PER CENT REJECTS, WHICH IS HIGH...

WE'LL TURN OUT TWO THOUSAND A DAY, EASILY!



NOW, HEN? OUR PLAYERS' FORTUNES CONTINUE TO PILE UP, ER, FRIENDS? LOOK NOW THEY'RE **BROWN**? **BROWN** **EQUALITY**? BUT NOW... NOW **GREEN** SETS DOWN AT THE GAMBLER LISTEN TO **DARBY** AND **HENNING**... AND **GREEN**...



SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS AT ONE DOLLAR AND SEVENTY FIVE CENTS EACH IS **\$105,000 PER MONTH**, HENNING...! **\$1260,000 PER YEAR**!



OUR PROFIT AFTER TAXES AND COSTS WILL PROBABLY BE CLOSE TO **\$200,000**!

\$200,000 SPLIT THREE WAYS CUTS THE PIE DOWN, HENNING?



ARE YOU SUGGESTING A **TWO-WAY SPLIT**, DARBY?

I **AM**? AND I HAVE A **PLAN**!

ALL RIGHT, DARBY? **SPLIT IT**!



THAT NIGHT, AT THE D.M.F. BAW-MILL.

WELL, GENTLEMEN? WE TOPPED OUR QUOTA TODAY? SHALL WE CLOSE UP?

HOW ABOUT A GAME OF **POKER**, FIELD?

GOOD IDEA, DARBY? WE HAVEN'T PLAYED **CARDS** IN MONTHS!



POKER? WHY, I WOULDN'T WOND A FEW HANDS?

GOOD? GET THE CARDS FROM MY **DESK**, HENNING?

HERE YOU ARE? ER... LET'S MAKE THE POT **INTERESTING**. SAY... **TEN AND TWENTY**?



THE GAME BEGAN? SOON, DARBY? FIELD WAS LOSING **STEADILY**...

THERE'S **ONE THOUSAND** YOU OWE THE BANK, FIELD?

LET'S **DOUBLE** THE ANTS, DARBY? GIVE ME A CHANCE TO **RECOMP** MY LOSSES?



YES, YES! SEE, NOW, DEAR READERS, HOW OUR PLAYERS' STAKES ARE CHANGING! DARRY'S AND NEW-NOME'S PILES GROW SHARPER, WHILE POOR FIELD'S BEGINS TO DIMINISH! AND THE GAME OF LIFE GOES ON...



WE'D BETTER QUIT, FIELD! YOU OWE US EACH TEN THOUSAND!



NO! NO! I'VE GOT TO WIN IT BACK! LET'S CONTINUE PLAYING!

AND THEN SEVERAL HOURS LATER, GENTLEMEN! I AM BROKE! I OWE YOU ALL I AM WORTH! I HAVE ONLY MY SHARE IN THE MILL LEFT!



ONE HAND, FIELD! ALL THAT WE'VE WON OF YOUR SHARE!



I - I DON'T KNOW!

IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE TO GET IT ALL BACK, FIELD!

ALL OR NOTHING?



ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! ONE HAND! ALL - OR NOTHING?

DEAL THE CARDS, DARRY!

HERE GOES!

THE PRYOFF HAND WAS DEALT! CARDS WERE DISCARDED, AND THEN...



TWO PAIR, GENTLEMEN!

SORRY, FIELD! THREE TENS!

GILBERT FIELD ROSE FROM HIS SEAT AND WENT INTO HIS OWN OFFICE! HENNING AND DARRY GAINED AT EACH OTHER.



IT WORKED, DARRY! A TWO-WAY SPLIT!

I TOLD YOU SO!

SEE, DEAR READERS! SEE HOW THE CHIPS ARE STACKED NOW! OLIVERT FIELD'S PALE IS **GONE**... SPLIT BETWEEN SAMUEL DARBY'S AND AVERILL HENNING'S! SEE HOW HIGH THE TWO REMAINING PILES STAND! SEE HOW HIGH...



POOR OLIVERT! I NEVER THOUGHT HE'D **FILL** HIMSELF! IT TO KNOW, I NEVER WOULD HAVE PERMITTED YOU TO USE THAT **MARKED DECK**, DARBY!



SHUT UP, YOU FOOL! SOMEONE WILL **ATAP** YOU!

YES, DARBY... HENNING! SOMEONE DID HEAR YOU! THERE... BELOW THE GRABLING BATH... OLIVERT FIELD HEARD! BUT IT WAS A LONG TIME... SEVERAL MONTHS IN FACT... BEFORE OLIVERT'S POT-TING HANDS PUSHED UPWARD FROM HIS GRAVE...



IT WAS THE NIGHT THAT BOTH DARBY AND HENNING WERE WORKING LATE AT THE SAW-MILL! NO ONE HEARD THE SAW-SPLITTING SHRIEKS THAT ECHOED INTO THE NIGHT AS THE STRANGE VIBRATING SOUND BEGAN...



THE NEXT MORNING, ED, THE MILL FOREMAN, CAME EARLY TO OPEN UP! HE FOUND SOMING DARBY AND AVERILL, HENNING STANDING STIFFLY BESIDE OLIVERT FIELD'S MACHINERY... STANDING IN A POOL OF BLOOD...



MR. DARBY? MR. HENNING?

BUT ED NEVER NOTICED THE MICROSCOPIC CUTS THAT RAN HORIZONTALLY ACROSS DARBY'S AND AVERILL'S BODIES! NOT UNTIL HE TOUCHED THEM DID THE DEAD PARTNERS **SPILL OUT** OVER THE BLOOD-STAINED FLOOR...



GOOD LORD!

FOR YOU SEE, FRIENDS, WHEN A PILE OF CHIPS GETS TOO HIGH, IT SPILLS OVER... SPOON... LIKE THESE... AVERILL'S WAS STANDING IN FRONT OF OLIVERT'S ROTTED COMPIRE PUT SHIRT AND JACKET THROUGH HIS **ANCE** MACHINERY OF COURSE, COLONEL TURNER REJECTED THOSE DISC! HEH, HEH! HWA...? WHAT DID THE ARMY BAPT WITH HAPER-TWIN TWENTY-SEVEN INCH WOODEN SPOON? OH, COME NOW! YOU'VE HEARD OF THE FLYING SPOONERS! THESE WERE FIRST TO SCALE! HEH, HEH!



YES, NOW! THIS IS YOUR CHIPP-KEEPER, SAYING... NEXT TIME YOU MEET YOUR LOCAL UNDERTAKER, ASK HIM IF HE'S GOT ANY EMPTY BOXES!

THE DEFILER



From Tabou on the French Ivory Coast to Takaredi on the Gold Coast, the drums were the news of Trader Trask's coming! Trader Trask . . . the most unscrupulous hawker ever to prey upon the western coast of Africa! Trader Trask . . . the man who played a beguiling ruse, and some cheap whisky on the black to cheat the ignorant natives of their gold, ivory, timber, and raw rubber. Whether he stole their few yards of finest cloth for their copra or a low grade of tobacco in exchange for their axes and hoes, he always came away with a great profit!

Trask's parker had been used up at the wharf at Takaredi for but two days when the hold was already three-quarters filled with the fruits of his "business transactions." Upon his arrival, Trask had made his way through the bazaar where the native shops were set up. He cursed fiercely as his palm-leaf was knocked off his head by the jostling African merchants and farmers who yammered over their wares like money-conscious monkeys.

The sun helmet rolled into a ball which was covered with a bamboo canopy. It wheeled around once and fell flat on top of some hand-carved ivory figurines that were arranged neatly on a bright red velvet cloth. Behind the display sat an Arab with a long hooked nose. The Arab leaned over and presented the trader a bar.

As Trask watched it from the obliging hand, he noticed the beautifully wrought silver pendant that swung from a chain about the Arab's neck. Trask asked to see it closely. Reluctantly, the latter unfastened the chain and handed it over. The hot sun ran around the little figures that embellished its right circumference with the visions and divine

revelations of Mohammed. In the center of the pendant, a blood-red ruby blinked evilly at Trask.

Trask turned the measure over in his palm. On its flat-surfaced back were some strange characters . . . like an Arabic *hidjra* Arabic!

The longer he was mesmerized by the talisman, the more he would possess it! He offered the owner a most exaggerated sum for it . . . abandoning all the trading that marked his former trading tactics. The Arab was abashed . . . would not sell! He plucked the jewel-studded object from Trask and snapped it about his neck again!

Trask had gone away in dismal defeat. All night long he chained in the cabin of his steamer.

The next morning, he walked heavily through the bazaar with a small pig under his arm. Reaching the soap-copra stalls, he jerked the sacred pendant from the startled merchant's neck. Quickly, he ripped open the underside of the squealing piglet with a knife and thrust the pendant into the red-rutting gash!

The Arab roared in horror at the sight, defiance of the contemptuous act! To the followers of Mohammed, the swine are unclean . . . the very embodiment of the devil! Now that the infidel man had touched sinful flesh, he could no longer use it! Trader Trask extracted the veiled treasure, threw the bleeding piglet at the ghreng, bare-breasted purveyor, and made off.

The next morning, Trask's native servant found him in his bunk: . . . his belly ripped open! . . . the slain piglet stuffed into the gash!

Once more the pendant reposed on the Arab's chest . . . like a bright star against his sky-blue workcoat!

The writing on the back of the pendant was in Sanskrit:

*The more death we have who would defile
Moon of Mohammed defile
To cast away sanctity, atone with a
Larger pig's life!*

THE VAULT-KEEPER'S

GRIM FAIRY TALE!

WELL, HERE IN THE LAST ISSUE OF THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE OLD WITCH TOLD YOU FIRST OF A GRIM FAIRY TALE! THEN, IN HER OWN WAY, THE HAUNT OF FEAR, SHE TOLD YOU A SECOND! THEN THE CRYPT-KEEPER SWINDLED THE IDEAL AND HE TOLD YOU ONE IN HIS OWN TALE FROM THE CRYPT! SO, IN WHOOZY'S FOOT! I KNOW A GOOD THING! HERE'S MY GRIM FAIRY TALE! I CALL THIS CHILDISH-CHILLER...

FOR NOW THE BELL TOLLS!

ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG LONG AGO, FAR FAR AWAY, THERE WAS A KINGDOM...

AND IN THIS KINGDOM, THERE WAS A CASTLE...



AND IN THIS CASTLE, THERE WAS A BELL-FAR...



AND IN THIS BELLY, THERE WAS BELL...



THE BELL IN THIS BELLY-IF IN THE CASTLE WAS THE PRIDE AND JOY OF THE KING AND QUEEN OF THIS KINGDOM...



EVERY TIME THAT THERE WAS A HOLIDAY OR AN IMPORTANT STATE FUNCTION IN THIS KINGDOM FAR, FAR AWAY, THE KING WOULD ORDER THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER TO RING THE BELL...



RING THE BELL!

YES, YOUR MAJESTY!

AND EVERY TIME THAT THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER OF THE FAR AWAY KINGDOM RANG THE BELL, THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE WOULD WATCH HIM JEALOUSLY...



ARE YOU WATCHING, ROYAL APPRENTICE?

I AM WATCHING, ROYAL BELL-RINGER!

FOR THIRTY-FOUR YEARS... THIRTY-FOUR LONG YEARS... THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE HAD BEEN WATCHING THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER RING THE ROYAL BELL...



KEEP!

HELLO, SONNY! DO YOU LIKE TO WATCH ME RING THE BELL?

GOLLY, YES! YES! SOMEDAY I'D LIKE TO RING THE BELL... SOMEDAY!



WELL! NOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME MY APPRENTICE, SONNY? AFTER ALL, I CAN LIVE FOREVER! AND WHEN I'M TOO OLD, YOU WOULD BECOME THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER... AND RING THE BELL!

GOLDFEET! I'LL SPEAK TO
 LIKE THAT FINE!



SO THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER
 SPOKE TO THE KING, AND THE
 LITTLE BOY BECAME THE ROYAL
 BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE...



NOW, YOU WATCH
 ME, SONNY (WATCH
 CAREFULLY!)

I WILL!
 BECOME
 SOMEDAY,
 I'LL
 RING THE
 BELL!

THE YEARS PASTED. THE ROYAL
 BELL-RINGER GREW OLD! THE
 ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE
 GREW UP! AT EVERY STATE
 FUNCTION OR ROYAL HOLIDAY,
 HE'D WATCH AS THE ROYAL BELL-
 RINGER RANG THE BELL...



YOU WATCHING, SONNY?

I'M WATCHING,
 ROYAL BELL-RINGER!
 SOMEDAY, I'LL RING
 THAT BELL...

THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER GREW OLDER AND OLDER!
 THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE GREW OLDER
 AND OLDER TOO! BUT THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER NEVER
 WISHED TO GIVE UP HIS JOB TO RING THE BELL!
 AND THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE GREW
 MORE AND MORE ENVILOUS...



YOU WATCHING,
 SONNY?

I'M WATCHING, OLD MAN!
 YOU'RE GETTING FEEBLE.
 OLD MAN! SOON YOU WILL NOT
 BE ABLE TO RING THE BELL!
 THEN I WILL!

FOR THIRTY-FOUR YEARS, THE ROYAL BELL-
 RINGER'S APPRENTICE JEALOUSLY WATCHED THE
 AGING ROYAL BELL-RINGER RING THE ROYAL
 BELL! THE APPRENTICE'S FINGERS ITCHED TO
 TAKE HOLD OF THE ROYAL BELL ROPE... ITCHED
 TO RING IT JUST ONE PULL...



JUST ONE PULL, OLD
 MAN! I WANT SO
 MUCH TO RING
 THE BELL!

YOU'LL GET YOUR
 DINNER, APPRENTICE!
 SOMEDAY, YOU'LL RING THE
 BELL HAVE PATIENCE!

BUT THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE HAD
 OUT OF PATIENCE AFTER THIRTY-FOUR YEARS!
 SO... WHEN THE KING ANNOUNCED...



ROYAL BELL-RINGER! TOMORROW
 IS THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY! I
 WANT YOU TO RING THE BELL...
 RING IT ALL DAY LONG!

YES, YOUR
 MAJESTY!

AFTER THE KING LEFT...



YOU ARE OLD, ROYAL BELL-
 RINGER! YOU WILL NOT HAVE
 THE STRENGTH TO RING
 THE BELL ALL DAY LONG!
 BESIDES I'VE WAITED
 THIRTY-FOUR YEARS TO
 RING THE BELL!

I KNOW, APPRENTICE!
 BUT AS LONG AS
 I HAVE STRENGTH
 IN MY HANDS, I
 WILL RING THE
 BELL!

THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE BECAME TERRIBLY ANGRY! HIS EYES BULGED IN THEIR SOCKETS.



I WANT TO RING THE BELL! LET ME RING THE BELL! ALWAYS I WATCH YOU RING THE BELL!

YOU ARE THE APPRENTICE! YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO WATCH!



I WANT TO RING THE BELL!

AS LONG AS I HAVE MY HANDS, I WILL RING THE BELL!



AND IF YOU HAD NO HANDS, YOU COULD NOT RING THE BELL!

APPRENTICE! DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!



AND IF YOU COULD NOT RING THE BELL, THEN I WOULD...

APPRENTICE! PUT DOWN THAT AXE!



I WANT TO RING THE BELL!

YAAAAA!

THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE LOOKED DOWN AT THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER WHOSE HANDS HE'D SEVERED...



TOMORROW... ALL DAY LONG... I WILL RING THE BELL...

EEEEEE!

SUDDENLY THE DOOR FLEW OPEN! THE KING STOOD THERE! THE LAST SPARK OF LIFE SEEPED FROM THE OLD ROYAL BELL-RINGER AND HE CUT ONTO THE CRUMBLING FLOOR...



WHAT, WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?

IT MEANS, YOUR MAJESTY, THAT I AM NO LONGER THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER'S APPRENTICE! I AM THE ROYAL BELL-RINGER!



YOU... YOU
KILLED
HIM!

TOMORROW, ON
THE QUEEN'S
BIRTHDAY - I
WILL RING THE
BELL... ALL DAY
LONG!



YOU KILLED
HIM FOR TRAFF
BECAUSE YOU
WANTED TO
RING THE
BELL?

I WAITED
THIRTY-
FOUR YEARS
FOR MY
CHANCE! THIRTY-
FOUR LONG
YEARS! BUT
HE DID NOT
DIE!



...SO YOU
KILLED
HIM!

AND NOW, I'LL
HAVE MY
CHANCE!



I AM SORRY, ROYAL
BELL-RINGER'S
APPRENTICE

ROYAL BELL-RINGER,
IF YOU DON'T MIND,
YOUR MAJESTY!



I AM SORRY, ROYAL BELL-
RINGER! YOU WILL NOT GET
YOUR CHANCE! YOU HAVE
COMMITTED MURDER! YOU
MUST BE PUNISHED... PUT
TO DEATH.

NO! NO! I
WANT TO RING
THE BELL!



YOU MUST BE
PUT TO DEATH
FOR YOUR CRIME!
GUARDS!

NO! NO! LET ME RING THE
BELL TOMORROW! PLEASE!
AFTER THAT, YOU CAN DO
WHAT YOU LIKE! BUT
PLEASE, TOMORROW...



LET ME RING THE
BELL! I HAVE
WAITED... FOR
THIRTY-FOUR...
THIRTY-FOUR...
YEARS! LET
ME RING IT!

ROYAL BELL-RINGER!
YOU ARE GUILTY OF
MURDER! YOU MUST
BE PUT TO DEATH!
TAKE HIM AWAY,
GUARDS!

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING...IN THE KINGDOM FAR AWAY...THE BELL BEGAN TO RING! IT RANG LOUD AND CLEAR...



IT WAS THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY! THE SHARP CLANGS OF THE BELL ECHOED FROM THE CASTLE...



ALL MORNING, THE BELL TOLLE OF THE CLEAR RINGS...DRIFTING FROM THE CASTLE...



TOWARD NOON, THE TOLLING BELL BECAME QUIETER, SOFTER...



TOWARD AFTERNOON, THE BELL'S TONES WERE MUFFLED...



AND TOWARD EVENING, ONLY A FAINT LIGHTED SPLASH RESOUNDED AGAINST THE BELL! FOR THE NEW ROYAL BELL-FORGER HAD MOVED AWAY THE BELL! HE ON WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIS BATTERED BOOTS...HIDDE THE BELL...SPRIDE DOWN...A BLOOD-SOAKED SAE TIED AROUND HIS BASHED HEAD...



"GEEZ! I'D HOPE THAT SAE TIE WOULD TELL RIDDIES! I HOPE IT STUCK A SWORD WITH YOU... A SPINAL SWORD! SO THE APPRENTICE LIFE-LONG AMBITION WAS FULFILLED THAT DAY! WELL, THAT'S WHAT YOU GET WHEN YOU USE YOUR HEAD! WHY THE SAE YOU ASK?



WELL, THE KING FELT THAT AN INSTRUMENTAL WAS MORE IN ORDER THAT DAY...WITHOUT A VOCAL REFRAIN! AFTER THAT, EVERYBODY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER AND NOW...THE OLD WITCH HEARS! SHELL 'EA P 'ER CARDSHOW THAT IS!

THE END...

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HUMPH! FIRST, THE CRYPT-KEEPER STEALS MY 'GRIM FAIRY TALE' IDEA! NOW, THAT OLD BECKER, THE VAULT-KEEPER! A NEW TRIST... A NEW SINKING! A GOOD THING WON'T SAVE THESE DAYS! BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, SOMEBODY SWIPES IT! THOSE OLD GORGOLASATES ARE AS BAD AS THOSE ROYAL PUBLISHERS MY ADVERT EDITORS SCREAM ABOUT! HUMPH! HOL, HOL! YEP! IT'S ME, KIDDIES! YOUR HOSTESS IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR... THE OLD WITCH! GOT MY FIRE LIT? GOT MY CAULDRON STEAMING? GOT A TASTY TALE OF TERROR FOR YOU! HURRY! BOO! HIT DOWN, AND I'LL FEED YOU THE PUTRID PORTION OF PROBIE'S CALL...

**WE AIN'T
GOT NO
BODY!**

THE DOOR TO MORTON BOONIN'S LAVISH APARTMENT EXPLODED OPEN! THE SWATHING MOUSE STOOD THERE, ITS EYES BURNING ITS DECOMPOSING HANDS REACHED TOWARD MORTON, OPENING AND CLOSING ITS SLUTCHING BONEY FINGERS...

**HENRY! NO! NO! YOU'RE DEAD!
WE KILLED YOU! NO! YOU
CAN'T BE**



NORTON LIFTED THE GUN HE'D BEEN GRIPPING! HE AIMED NERVOUSLY AT THE TOTTERING FIGURE! THE ROTTED MOUTH DROPPED OPEN AND A HOARSE VOICE EXPLODED FROM WITHIN...

GO AHEAD, NORTON! DON'T STOP SHOOT ME! GO AHEAD! BULLETS WON'T STOP ME NOW! I'VE COME FOR REVENGE!

THE THING MOVED TOWARD HIM! NORTON BACKED AWAY FIRING AGAIN AND AGAIN AT THE STIFF BODY BEFORE HIM...

HOLD-UP! STOP, NORTON! STOP! BULLETS WON'T STOP ME! I TOLD YOU!

THE SIX SHOTS BOOMED THROUGH THE APARTMENT! THEN THE DULL CLICKS RESOUNDED, AS NORTON'S REVOLVER HAMMER STRUCK THE EMPTY SHELL-CASES AGAIN...

NOW YOUR GUN IS EMPTY, NORTON! YOU ARE HELPLESS!

PLEASE, HENRY! HAVE PITY! PLEASE...

THE THING BEFORE NORTON DREW BACK ITS DECAYING LIPS, REVEALING WHITE TEETH IN AN IDIOTIC GRIN! IT CHUCKLED...

SHOULD I HAVE PITY, NORTON? SHOULD IT DID YOU HAVE PITY, YOU AND CHARLIE AND SIDNEY? DID YOU HAVE PITY THAT DAY... ON THE TRAIN?

PLEASE, HENRY! I, I DIDN'T WANT TO DO IT! IT WAS THEIR IDEA... ALL THEIRS!

NORTON STARED AT THE SIX BULLET HOLES THAT HAD BEEN TORN THROUGH THE THING'S BODY! THE HOARSE VOICE ONCE ON! THE NOON BEGAN TO SPIN! THE WHISTLE OF A TRAIN RESOUNDED... FAR AWAY...

REMEMBER, NORTON! REMEMBER THE TRIP WE'D DECIDED TO TAKE! WE WERE GOING UPSTATE... FOR A REST! WE WERE GOING TO GO SOME FISHING!

'REMEMBER THE LIMITED... RUSHING OVER THE MARIAN RAILS?' AND NOW YOU AND CHARLIE AND SIDNEY ORDER...

ARE YOU SURE, NORTON? ARE YOU SURE HENRY NAMED YOU AN BENEFICIARY?

POSITIVE! TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS WITH DOUBLE INTEREST!

THAT MEANS FIFTY-THOUSAND TO SPLIT THREE WAYS! OVER THIRTEEN GRAND EACH!

OH, HENRY! HE'S COMING DOWN THE CORRIDOR...

LET'S GO!

"REMEMBER, NORTON? REMEMBER HOW THE THREE OF YOU MET ME IN THE TRAIN CORRIDOR..."

"HELLO, FELLOWS! WHAT'S UP?"
"O' MOM, HENRY!"
"WE'RE GOING INTO THE OLD CAR!"
"...PLAY SOME FUN TUNES!"

"REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED WHEN WE GOT BETWEEN THE CARS OF THE SPEEDING TRAIN..."

"WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT? HEY!"
"LET GO OF ME!"
"GURE, HENRY! SURE!"
"PUSH HIM! PUSH HIM!"

"YOU PUSHED ME, NORTON! YOU AND CHARLIE AND GADGET PUSHED ME BETWEEN THE CARS! I PUSHED ME TO THE SPEEDING RAILS WHIRLING BELOW US... I LUNGED ME UNDER THOSE KNIFE-LIKE WHEELS..."

"HOW CLEVER YOU WERE... PULLING THE EMERGENCY CORD... ACTING UPSET..."

"WHAT HAPPENED? HE FELL?"
"WHO STOPPED THIS TRAIN?"
"HE FELL BETWEEN THE CARS!"

"THEY FOUND ME, DIDN'T THEY? THE CARS BACK FROM WHERE I FELL..."

"HE'S UNDER THERE, IS HE... IS HE DEAD?"
"ALL RIGHT!"



"DEAD, ALL RIGHT? HIS HEAD, BOTH HANDS... AND BOTH FEET HAVE BEEN SEVERED FROM HIS BODY!"

"GOOD LORD!"
"CHUCKLE!"

"THEY SEARCHED THE TRACKS, DIDN'T THEY, NORTON? THEY SEARCHED THE TRACKS FOR MY HANDS AND FEET AND HEAD," REMEMBER?

"CAN'T UNDERSTAND IF ONLY THE TONGUE NO TRACE OF THE SEVERED LIMBS... AND HIS... HEAD!"
"LEARN'S THE THE GADGET IN THE UNDERCARRIAGE OF ONE OF THE CARS, O'MOM! WE'VE GOT TO GET THE TRAIN MOVING AGAIN! THE FLYER'S DUE IN TEN MINUTES..."



BUT THEY DIDN'T FIND THEM. DID THEY, MORTON? MY LITTLE BROTHER! THEY SEARCHED ALL THE UNDERGARMENTS OF THE TRAMP THEY EVEN SEARCHED THE FRACKS FOR NILES... AND THE IMMEDIATE AREA OF THE "ACCIDENT!"

IT'S INCREDIBLE! THOSE SEVERED LIMBS'LL FORM UP! YOU'LL SEE! A MAN FALLS BEHIND THE WHEELS OF A TRAM AND ONLY HIS FINGER IS FOUND!

"A MONTH PASSES, BUT THEY DUNN'T TURN UP... AND THEY FIND BECAUSE OF THE IDENTIFICATION ON MY TONGUE, THE INSURANCE COMPANY PAID OFF! REMEMBER!"

HERE IS YOUR CHECK, MR. MORTON! FORTY THOUSAND DOLLARS!

THANK YOU, SIR!

"YOU CELEBRATED THE NIGHT OF THE PAYOFF, DIDN'T YOU, MORTON? YOU... AND CHARLIE... AND SIDNEY..."

WELL, HERE'S TO YOUR BROTHER, MORTON! AND THIRTEEN BRAND APPEAL!

"AND IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO YOU THAT THERE WAS ANY TIE-UP BETWEEN MY DEATH AND THE DEPARTMENT STORE THEFT..."

"WHEN THE DUNNY THAT HAPPENED BY... WHILE THE STORE-WINDOW MARRIAGE WAS BEING STOLEN, TOLD HIS STORY, THE POLICE LAUGHED AT HIM..."



"I KNOW IT, I TELL YOU THE MARRIAGE WAS MOVIN' BY ITSELF! NOBODY WASH CARRYIN' IT! I KNOW IT!"

HEH, HEH! YEAR, MAC! STEPPED TO THE HILLS, EXPLAINTIN'!

"AND WHEN THE PAUPER-MAN'S HANDS AND FEET AND HEAD OF THE MARRIAGE WERE FOUND IN AN EMPTY LOT, THERE WAS STILL NO CONNECTION MADE..."

"BUT SIDNEY WAS SURPRISED THAT SUNDAY NIGHT, WASN'T HE, WHEN HE OPENED HIS DOOR IN ANSWER TO THE ANNOYING KNOCK?"

THEY'RE FROM THAT STOLEN MARRIAGE, ALL RIGHT! NOW WHY IN BLAZES DID THE GUY THAT SHIPPED IT DO THAT?

PROBABLY A HOT MR. TRACY! WE'LL FIND THE REST OF THE DUNNY, REST ASSURED!

YES? WHO... IS... THAT?

HENRY!

HELLO, SIDNEY?



"YES, NORTON! SIDNEY WAS VERY SURPRISED."

"NO? NOT IT CAN'T BE? HE SURVIVED YOUR BODY?"

"MY BODY, SIDNEY? MY BODY!"

"AND SO WERE THE POLICE SURPRISED WHEN THEY FOUND SIDNEY'S BODY... OR WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIM..."

"TURN TO FINGER LIKE SOME BILD ANIMAL ATTACKED HIM!"

"ALL RIGHT! LET'S CLEAN UP THE PLACE, BOYS!"

"A WITNESS WHO VOLUNTEERED INFORMATION TOLD A WEIRD STORY..."

"I WAS GONE INTO THE ELEVATOR. WHEN THIS BOY CAME OUT HE WALKED FUNNY, JERKY, LIKE A... AND HIS FACE... IT WAS WHITE... WHITE LIKE A GHOST!"

"COULD YOU IDENTIFY HIM, MR. YESSEN?"

"CHARLIE CAME TO YOU, DIDN'T HE, NORTON? HE WAS FRIGHTENED! AND YOU LAUGHED AT HIM..."

"IT'S HENRY! I TELL YOU! HE'S COME BACK TO AVENGE HIS DEATH!"

"YOU'RE MURKHOOD, CHARLIE! YOU NEED A REST! WHY DON'T YOU GO AWAY FOR A FEW DAYS?"

"BUT YOU DIDN'T LAUGH LONG, DID YOU, NORTON? THAT NIGHT AS CHARLIE WAS PACKING..."

"WHO IS IT? WHO CAME OUT? NORTON? THAT YOUR MORT... LEASE?"

"GOING SOMEWHERE, CHARLIE?"

"CHARLIE STARED AT MY FACE, NORTON! HE DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE WHAT HE SAW! BUT HE HAD TO! IT WAS ME, ALL RIGHT ON... A LITTLE FRIGHTENED, PERHAPS! STARTING TO SWEAT, YES! BUT ME!"

"NO! NO, HENRY! IT CAN'T BE! YOU! YOU'RE DEAD! DEAD!"

"YES, CHARLIE! YOU'RE RIGHT! I AM DEAD!"

"HE SCREAMED SO, NORTON! YOU SHOULD HAVE HEARD HIM..."



"AND THE POLICE FOUND CHARLIE... JUST LIKE
SIDNEY."

ANOTHER ONE? TORN
TO PIECES? THERE
MUST BE A HANGING
"LOOSE!"

LOOK, CAPTAIN!
PIECES OF COLORED
PAPER! FLESH
COLORED! WHAT DO
YOU MAKE OF IT?

NORTON COVERED IN THE CORNER, THE THING LOOKING
GAVE ME...

"YES, NORTON! HE STOLE THAT
PAPER MAÇON MANNING!" MY HANDS
AND FEET AND HEAD! HE STOLE IT! WE
NEEDED IT! WE HAD TO BE ABLE TO GET
AROUND... WITHOUT ATTRACTING ANY ATTENTION...
SO WE COULD DO WHAT WE HAD TO DO!"

NO, HENRY!
PLEASE!

SUDDENLY, NORTON STIFFENED!
HEEDED BULGED IN THEIR SOCKETS!
THE COLOR DRAINED FROM HIS
FACE...

NORTON STARED... HIS BLOOD-
SHOT EYES FOLLOWING HENRY'S
HANDS.

FOLLOWED THEM AS THEY WENT
REAR, FINALLY CLOSING ABOUT HIS
PULSATING THROAT...

HENRY! NO! OH, LORD...

NO! NO!

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

NORTON'S HYSTERICAL SHRIEK ATTRACTED THE
NEIGHBORS WHO PHONED FOR THE POLICE! WHEN
THEY ARRIVED, THEY FOUND...

A PAPIER MAÇON
MANNING!

WITH NO HANDS
OR FEET... AND NO
HEAD!

TORN TO PIECES...
LIKE THE OTHER
TWO

LOOK HERE, CAPTAIN!
NEAR THE WINDOW!



MEANWHILE, FAR ACROSS TOWN, A SEVERED HAND, ROTTING AND DECAYED, SCRAMBLED UP THE WINDST-IRON GATE, AND TRIPPED THE LATCH.

HURRY! HURRY!
WE HAVE WORK
TO DO!



THE CEMETERY GATE SWUNG OPEN! THE HAND SCRAMBLED DOWN AND RETURNED TO THE HORSE-FOGGED ROAD.

QUICKLY! I WILL
LOOK FOR THE
GRAVE OF HARRY ME!
HARRY ME?



IT WAS A WEIRD TABLEAU... THE FIVE OF THEM! THE TWO FEET HOPPED ALONG BEHIND THEM, A HAND CRANDED ITSELF! THE DEADER HAND LAY, PALM UPWARD, UPON THE BACK OF THE MOVING HAND! THE DIRECTING HEAD RESTED IN THE UPPER HAND'S PALM.

THERE IT IS! THERE!
TO YOUR RIGHT!



THE HORRIBLE GROUP APPROACHED THE GRAVE. THE HEAD ROLLED FROM ITS PERCH AND LAY, JADE-EYED AND PUTRID... AT THE BASE OF THE GRAVESTONE! THE HANDS BEGAN TO SCRATCH AT THE SOFT EARTH.

HURRY! DIG!
DIG!



THE HOLE GREW LARGER! THE FEET TAPPED INSTANTLY! THE HEAD USED THE HANDS ON THE HOLLOW BOOM OF A FIST STRIKING A COFFIN BODICE INTO THE EARTH.

YOU'VE REACHED IT!
SMASH A HOLE... SMASH
A HOLE! DON'T FORGET!
MAKE IT LARGE ENOUGH!



AND SO, HERRY BOONIN'S HANDS RETURNED TO THEIR PROPER PLACES AT HERRY'S WRISTS! HIS FEET SHUDDLED CLOSE GRACE MORE TO HIS ROTTING ANKLES! AND ON HIS NOTTED SHOULDERS, HIS HEAD FINALLY CLOSED ITS BURNING EYES... AND THE ROTTED LIPS CURLED IN A SLIGHT SMILE!

HIS, HERRY! HERRY WAS TOGETHER AGAIN, KIDDEST! THE POLICE NEVER DID FIGURE OUT HOW AN ARMLESS, FOOTLESS AND HEADLESS MANHIM COULD FEAR ANYBODY APART, AND TO THIS DAY, THE MYSTERY REMAINS UNBOLDED! BUT CHARLIE KNOWS... AND SIDNEY KNOWS... AND MORTON KNOWS... AND NOW WE KNOW... DON'T WE? ONLY BY THE WAY! I WAS TALKING TO HERRY'S HEAD... JUST THE OTHER DAY! IT'S THINKING ABOUT TAKING ANOTHER TRIP... IT AND ITS TRAVELING COMPANIONS! BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR THEM, WON'T YOU? YOU'VE NOW! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, THE HAUNT OF FEAR!





THE VAULT KEEPER

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NO. 29
FEB - MAR

THE VAULT OF



1963

HORROR

FEATURING...



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



IN THIS ISSUE:

E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY
RAY BRADBURY
AMERICA'S TOP HORROR WRITER!

HUMOR IN A JUGULAR VEIN

TALES CALCULATED TO DRIVE YOU

10¢
No. 1
JAN-1978
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MAD

10¢



"I'VE GOT
THE BEST
AND MOST
INTERESTING
STORY EVER
I'VE EVER
HEARD OF."

"GUY
WHERE IS
EVERYONE
GOING?"

"GUY, DOWN
TO THE
HOMELAND, OF
COURSE, TO PICK
UP THE
LATEST ISSUE
OF
MAD!"



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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, HERE! WELL, IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER TERRIFYING TALE FROM MY COLLECTION HERE IN THE DARK AND DREADFUL VAULT OF HORROR... AND, AS ALWAYS, I'VE SELECTED A REAL BITE-SIZED ONE FOR YOUR FIENDISH PLEASURES! DO YOU BELIEVE IN HAUNTED HOUSES? EVER WONDER WHY OR HOW THEY GET THAT WAY? WELL, IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO BECOME TOO FRIGHTENED, I'LL TELL YOU! HERE IT IS... THE TALE CALLED... **THE**

MAUSOLEUM!



THE WIND HOWLED ACROSS THE BLEAK ENGLISH MOORS, WHIPPING THE MAN'S COAT-TAILS, LASHING THE ROCKY COUNTRYSIDE WITH STIRLING FURY! AN ETERNAL MIST CLUNG TO THE GROUND, AND FINE SPRAY SATURATED THE AIR WITH EXCESSIVE MOISTURE! FROM BEYOND THE JAGGED CLIFFS HE COULD HEAR THE BOOMING SURF, AND HE WATCHED THE MONSTRIOUS SOARING OF THE BARNES HIGH ABOVE! HE WAS DEFINITELY PLEASED...

THE MAN SMILED BROADLY AND WALKED BRISKLY ALONG THE ROAD UNTIL HE ARRIVED AT THE DOOR TO THE CASTLE HE NODDED.

I OWN THIS CASTLE? NAME IS WEATHERS?

JUST THE MAN I WANT TO SEE? MAY I COME IN?

THEIR STEPS ECHOED AGAIN AND AGAIN FROM THE STONE CORRIDOR WALLS AS THE DODDERING MR. WEATHERS LED THE WAY TO THE LIBRARY...

YES! NOW DO YOU SEE MY NAME IS MARTIN? HOWARD MARTIN! IT'S LIKE TO SPEAK TO THE OWNER OF THIS CASTLE?



THIS... THIS PLACE IS MAGNIFICENT?

THANK YOU, SIR? IT HAS GOTTEN A HISTORY! PLEASE SIT DOWN...

MR. WEATHERS, I CAME HERE FROM THE UNITED STATES TO FIND A CASTLE JUST LIKE THIS ONE! I WANT TO BUY IT, AND YOU CAN SET THE PRICE!

I'M FLATTERED, MR. MARTIN! THAT IS, OF COURSE, A FINE OFFER!

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO LIVE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS! IT PASCHATES ME! I'M GOING TO HAVE EVERY BIT OF IT TRANS-PORTED TO THE STATES AND REBUILD IT JUST...

BUT, MR. MARTIN? I'M AFRAID THE CASTLE IS NOT FOR SALE?



WHY? BUT WHY NOT? I SAID I'D PAY ANYTHING YOU ASK! I WANT THIS CASTLE! PRICE IS NO OBJECT! JUST NAME IT! I'M VERY WEALTHY! I...

MR. MARTIN, THIS CASTLE HAS BEEN IN OUR FAMILY FOR CENTURIES! I'D NEVER SELL IT!

NOW, DON'T BE HASTY! THINK IT OVER! HERE'S MY CARD! H...

I'M SORRY, MR. MARTIN! THE DECISION STANDS! THIS CASTLE IS NOT FOR SALE! GOOD-BYE!



WELL, MR. WEATHERBY, YOU HAVE MY CARD! I EXPECT TO REMAIN IN LONDON FOR A FEW MORE WEEKS, SO...

GOOD-DAY, MR. MARTIN!

SLAM

INGLE! HAVE YOU GONE MAD? A CHANGE LIKE THAT ONLY COMES ONCE IN A LIFETIME!

NEPHEW, MIND YOUR MANNERS! WHILE I'M HEAD OF THIS HOUSE, THE CASTLE SHALL STAY INTACT!

BUT YOU KNOW WE CAN'T PAY THE TAXES! WE'RE BROKE! YOU MUST SELL THE CASTLE!

NEPHEW PLEASE! THE CASTLE WILL NOT BE SOLD!

I WON'T LET YOU DO IT! YOU'LL DIE SOON - AND ALL THE DEBTS WILL BE ON MY SHOULDERS! WHAT ABOUT ME? WHAT ABOUT ME??

STOP! STOP SHAKING ME!

I'M NOT GOING TO ROT IN THIS CREEPY PLACE! THIS IS MY CHANCE TO GET OUT FROM UNDER, AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SPOIL IT!

NEPHEW! PLEASE! WAIT! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH...

THE SLOW SPLIT MR. WEATHERBY'S HEAD WIDE OPEN AND HE FELL HEAVILY TO THE STONE FLOOR! THE NEPHEW RELEASED HIS GRIP ON THE WEAPON AND KNELT BESIDE THE BLOOD-COVERED BODY OF THE LITTLE OLD MAN! HE RUMAGED QUICKLY THROUGH THE POCKETS...

AND HERE IT IS! 'HOWARD MARTIN - GORCHESTER HOTEL, LONDON!'

THE YOUNG MAN LIFTED HIS UNCLE'S BODY TO HIS SHOULDERS AND CARRIED HIM OUTSIDE TO A SMALL BUILDING - THE FAMILY MAUSOLEUM!

...SAFEST PLACE! THEY'LL NEVER THINK TO LOOK FOR HIM THERE!



WITH A KEY FROM THE OLD MAN'S POCKET, HE OPENED THE HUGE IRON DOORS AND BROUGHT THE CORPSE INSIDE! HE OPENED ONE OF THE ORNATE COFFINS...

PHEW!... THIS PLACE STINKS! NOW TO SHOVE HIM... LEAVE HIM!



QUICKLY, HE CLOSED THE COFFIN-LID AND LEFT THE MAUSOLEUM! HE MADE CERTAIN THE DOOR WAS LOCKED. THEN ENTERED THE CASTLE AND CLEARED AWAY THE ACCUSING BLOOD!

THERE! I'LL PUT THIS THING BACK WHERE I GOT IT. AND THEN...



HENRY, HENRY! GUESS YOU COULD SAY OLD MR. WEATHERBY HAD A *SPLIT- PERSONALITY*! ANYWAY THE NEPHEW TOOK ONE OF HIS UNCLE'S ANGEL AND TOSSED IT INTO A *GRINDERS* BOX, A SHORT WAY FROM THE CASTLE! THEN HE RACED TO THE POLICE STATION IN THE VILLAGE...



TRY TO CALM YOURSELF, MR. WEATHERBY! TELL US JUST WHAT HAPPENED!



IT'S HORRIBLE! MY UNCLE AND I WERE OUT WALKING... THROUGH THE *BOSS*! THEN SUDDENLY, HE TRIPPED AND FELL FROM THE PATH... INTO THE *GRINDERS*! HE... HE'S *GONE*!

NATURALLY, THERE WAS AN INVESTIGATION! THEY TRIED SHAPPLING FOR THE BODY, BUT THEY NEVER FOUND IT! THEY ONLY FOUND THE UNCLE'S RAT...



SORRY, MR. WEATHERBY, BUT IT'S *HOPELESS*! WE HAVE TO GIVE IT UP!

...WOULDN'T HAVE GOT THE RAT EXCEPT THAT IT WAS TOO LIGHT TO BARK!

NO BODY...NO MURDER! THE INQUEST WAS BRIEF...

...AND IN VIEW OF THE EVIDENCE, OR LACK OF IT... WE DOOLAND CORNELIUS WEATHERBY LEGALLY DEAD AND HEREBY STATE THAT THE CAUSE OF HIS DEATH WAS *ACCIDENTAL* DUE TO...



HA HA HA HA!

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE VENDOR, THE NEWBORN WENT DIRECTLY TO THE DOORHSEER HOTEL...

MR. MARTIN, I AM RATHAN WEATHERBY! MY UNCLE SAID YOU WERE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING OUR CASTLE, AND...

WEATHERBY? OF COURSE! COME IN! COME IN!



THEY TALKED FOR A LONG TIME, BUT FINALLY...

THEN IT'S SETTLED! THE ENTIRE CASTLE IS YOURS FOR \$100,000 AMERICAN MONEY! BUT REMEMBER... **NOT THE MAUSOLEUM!** THAT MUST NOT BE TOUCHED!

PRECISELY! I'LL MAKE OUT A CHECK RIGHT NOW! OH, BY THE WAY...



THE, AH, CASTLE... IT IS HAUNTED. I'VE HEARD. AFTER ALL... OLD ENGLISH CASTLES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE...

HAUNTED? ER, OF COURSE! DEFINITELY, MR. MARTIN! WHY, I GUARANTEE IT! SIGN THE CHECK, PLEASE!

AND SO, THE CASTLE WAS TORN DOWN STONE BY STONE, SHIPPED TO AMERICA, AND THERE, STONE BY STONE, IT WAS REBUILT...



BACK IN ENGLAND, RATHAN WEATHERBY, NOW WELL-TO-DO, HAPPENED TO MEET AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE...

AYE, RATHAN! THERE'S WEIRD GOING AT THE OLD CASTLE GROUNDS! IT'S GOOD YE SOLD IT WHEN YE DID!

WEIRD GOING AT THE CASTLE? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



NO ONE DARES GO NEAR SINCE YE LEFT! EVERY NIGHT, THEY TELL OF THE WAILS AND AFRIEL WOMAN'S SOUNDS THAT COME FROM THE MAUSOLEUM!

WHA, 'T THE MAUSOLEUM? GOOD HEAVENS! I'D BETTER INVESTIGATE!



THAT NIGHT, RATHAN STEALTHILY VISITED THE SITE OF THE OLD CASTLE! THE WIND WHISPERED IN HIS EARS, AND THE MIST-FILLED AIR CHILLED HIM TO THE BONE! HE LOOKED AROUND SEARCHINGLY...



GOOD LORD! THE MAUSOLEUM! IT'S BONE!

SEVERAL HOURS LATER, A TRANS-CONTINENTAL PLANE SPED THROUGH THE SKY'S SET TOWARD AMERICA.

BLASTED *BOOF!* I DISTINCTLY TOLD HIM *NOT* TO TOUCH THAT MAUSOLEUM! IF ANYONE OPENS THAT COFFIN—



AND IN AMERICA, MR. MARTIN JOYFULLY CRAWLED INTO BED TO SPEND HIS FIRST NIGHT IN THE CASTLE...

AH! THIS IS THE LIFE! EN? WHAT'RE THOSE NOISES?



CURIOUS, HE SLEPT ON A NOSE AND PEERED OUT HIS WINDOW.

SOUNDS LIKE IT'S COMING FROM THE GARDEN! E.



SHOOK, YET ENTRANCED, HE SLUTCHED HIS NOSE TIGHTER AS HE WATCHED THE GRIEY LIGHT THAT UNFOLDED BEFORE HIS EYES! THERE ON THE LAWN, ILLUMINATED BY THE DENSE, GOLD-BLUE MOONLIGHT, A HALF-DOZEN 'CREATURES' WERE *REBUILDING THE ANCIENT MAUSOLEUM!*



HE WATCHED IN AWE FOR UNTOLD HOURS AS THE SMALL BUILDING GRADUALLY TOOK SHAPE INTO THE SMALL HOUSES OF GORMING THEY WORROED... EFFICIENTLY... SILENTLY! MR. MARTIN REMAINED AWARE AS LONG AS HE COULD... BUT FINALLY HE FELL ASLEEP BY THE WINDOW.



THEIR BODIES WERE ROTTED AND DECAYED! SOME WERE NOTHING MORE THAN SKELETONS! AND CHAINS OF SKIN SEEMED TO FALL FROM THEIR FRAMES AS THEY WORROED... YET EACH WAS EXCEPTIONALLY STRONG FOR THEY CARRIED THE STONE BLOCKS WITH EASE!



E... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S... IT'S SO HORRIBLE, BUT... FASCINATING! THE CASTLE REALLY IS HAUNTED!

HE AWOKED WITH A START! THE WARM SUN STREAMED INTO THE ROOM AND THE TWITTERING OF BIRDS MET HIS EARS! THE GARDEN WAS SILENT AND DESERTED! BUT THE COMPLETED MAUSOLEUM STOOD... MUTE TESTIMONY TO THE EVENT HE HAD WITNESSED!



HURRIEDLY, HE MADE FOR THE GARDEN! THE MAUSOLEUM STILL REMAINED...OBVIOUS...FOR-
GODS-SAKE...



HE EXAMINED THE SMALL BUILDING CAREFULLY! FRONT AND REAR... AND ALL AROUND THE GENERAL AREA!



BUT MR. MARTIN WASN'T THE ONLY ONE INTERESTED IN THE MAUSOLEUM! THAT NIGHT, NATHAN WEATHERS RECALLED THE WALL SURROUNDING THE ESTATE...



UNWARE THAT HE WAS BEING WATCHED, NATHAN FORTUPLY SCREAMED ACROSS THE LAWN TO THE MAUSOLEUM. AS HE CONFRONTED IT, HE STOPPED... HIS EYES GLAZING FROM THEIR SOCKETS IN HORROR...



TRANSFIXED IN TERROR, HE COULD NOT EVADE THE CLUTCHING, WITHERED ARM THAT EXTENDED FROM THE INKY BLACKNESS AND SNATCHED HIM INSIDE....



IMMEDIATELY, THE IRON DOOR SLAMMED SHUT! MR. MANTIN WAS SCORING ULOWS, YET *EXTREMELY PLEASED*.

HAVE IT ALL! I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT MINDOLANS! I WASN'T ABLE TO TELL IF THAT PERSON WAS ALIVE... ON JUST ONE OF THOSE... CREATURES!



GOOD HEAVENS! THOSE AWFUL SCREAMS! IT'S MATCHES! I. I WONDER WHAT THEY COULD BE DOING!



INSIDE THE DEPTHS OF THE MAUSOLEUM, NATHAN WAS BEING THRUST INTO AN ORNATE COFFIN! A HALF DOZEN GORGES FORCED AND PUSHED HIM INTO THE SAPIES BOX, BRUSHING ASIDE HIS FRANTIC TRIES TO FREE HIMSELF.



NO! NO! STOP! YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME! STOP!

GRIINING, HOTTED FACES LEERED DOWN ON HIM! PIECES OF DECAYED FLESH AND CHUNKS OF MANGLED- INFESTED BONE CAME OFF IN HIS HANDS AS HE STRUGGLED MIGHTILY! BUT HE FOUGHT IN VAIN! THE LID CLOSED OVER HIM AND HAMMERS MAILED A RHYTHM TO HIS DEATH CRIES!



MR. MANTIN IS EXTREMELY SATISFIED WITH HIS PURCHASE! IT TRULY IS A *WANTED* CASTLE! SO PROUD IS HE, THAT EVERY NIGHT HE INVITES GUESTS TO LISTEN TO THE AGONIZED WAILS THAT EMANATE FROM INSIDE THE MAUSOLEUM!



HEH, HEH! NOTHING LIKE A HAPPY ENDING! ISN'T IT SAD THAT NATHAN AND HIS UNCLE HAD THAT *SPLIT-UP*? BUT THAT'S *LIFE*! OR IS IT *DEATH*? ANYWAY, I BET NATHAN WOULD LIKE TO *SLOW HIS LID*! HIS *COFFIN-LID*! THAT IS! HEH, HEH! WELL, TIME TO GO! THE *CRYPT-KEEPER* IS CHOMPING AT THE BIT, DYING TO TELL YOU HIS STORY! SEE YOU SOON!



THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HENT AND NOW IT'S MY TURN TO ENTERTAIN YOU! SO, COME IN! COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! ONCE AGAIN, YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER HAS CHOSEN A STORY ADAPTED FROM A TALE BY THAT MASTER OF HORROR AND FANTASY, RAY BRADBURY! THIS CHILLER IS ONE OF MY FAVORITES! IT'S CALLED...

LET'S PLAY POISON!



MICHAEL SCREAMED. RECESS WAS OVER AND MR. HOWARD, THE TEACHER, WAS STILL ABSENT FROM THE FILLING ROOM. THE SIXTEEN BOYS AND GIRLS GROWLED ABOUT MICHAEL...



THE SIXTEEN BOYS AND GIRLS, BUMPING AND CLUSTERING AND BREAKING, RAISED A WINDOW. IT WAS THREE FLIGHTS DOWN TO THE SIDEWALK. MICHAEL FELL.

WE HATE YOU!



MICHAEL FELL THREE FLIGHTS...

MICHAEL DIED.



THEY TOOK HOLD OF MICHAEL AND PUSHED HIM OUT THE WINDOW. MR. HOWARD, THEIR TEACHER, CAME INTO THE ROOM, SHOUTING...

WAIT A MINUTE!



NOTHING WAS MORE ABOUT IT. THE POLICE SWISHED ELOQUENTLY. THERE CHILDREN WERE EIGHT OR NINE. THEY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY WERE DOING. SO

IT... IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY. BUT MR. I'LL... I'LL NEVER SWYFF TEACH AGAIN!



MR. HOWARD GAVE NO ANSWER. HE REMAINED SILENT AND A TERRIBLE LIGHT FILLED HIS EYES. AND LATER HE REMARKED...

IF I TOLD THEM THE PHOTO, THEY WOULD THINK HE QUITE INSANE.



MR. HOWARD PACKED HIS THINGS AND WENT TO LIVE IN A SMALL, READY TOWN FOR SEVEN YEARS ON AN INCOME MANAGED FROM WRITING POETRY. HE NEVER MARRIED. THE FEW WOMEN HE APPROACHED ALWAYS DENIED.

A BIG FAMILY! I LOVE MY FAMILY! DON'T YOU?

CHILDREN? GOOD LORD!



IN THE AUTUMN OF HIS SEVENTH YEAR OF SELF-ENFORCED RETIREMENT, A GOOD FRIEND OF MR. HOWARD'S - A TEACHER, FELL ILL. FOR LACK OF A PROPER SUBSTITUTE, MR. HOWARD WAS SUMMONED AND CONVINCED THAT IT WAS HIS DUTY TO TAKE OVER THE CLASS. BECAUSE HE REALIZED THE APPOINTMENT COULD LAST NO LONGER THAN A FEW WEEKS, MR. HOWARD AGREED, UNHAPPILY. ON THAT MORNING MORNING IN SEPTEMBER, AS MR. HOWARD SLIGHTLY PAGED THE MILES OF THE SCHEDULE, HE ANNOUNCED:

SOMETIMES, SOMETIMES I ACTUALLY BELIEVE THAT CHILDREN ARE **IMMATURED** FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION!



MOST OF MR. HOWARD'S WORDS RAN UNFAMILIARLY INTO THE WASHED AND UNFASHIONED EARS OF THE CHILDREN AROUND HIM, BUT ALL STARED AT HIM, AS IF HYPONOTIZED.

YOU ARE ANOTHER RACE ENTIRELY. YOUR MOTHER, YOUR DISOBEIDENCES YOU ARE NOT HUMAN! YOU ARE CHILDREN! THEREFORE, UNTIL SUCH TIMES AS YOU ARE ADULTS, YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DEMAND PRIVILEGES OR QUESTION YOUR ELDERS WHO KNOW BETTER...



MR. HOWARD PAUSED AND PUT HIS ELEGANT RUMP UPON THE CHAIR BEHIND THE NEAT DUST-LESS DESK...

LIVING IN A WORLD OF FANTASY - WELL, THERE'LL BE NO FANTASY HERE! YOU'LL SOON DISCOVER THAT A RULE ON YOUR HAND IS NO DREAM, NO FAIRIE TALE, NO PETER PAN ESCAPEMENT.



HE STOPPED, AND HIS SHINY DARK EYES WHIPPED FROM FACE TO FACE OF HIS SMALL AUDIENCE...

SOMETIMES, SOMETIMES I BELIEVE CHILDREN ARE LITTLE MONSTERS THRUST FROM HELL, BECAUSE THE DEVIL COULD NO LONGER COPE WITH THEM AND I CERTAINLY BELIEVE THAT EVERYTHING SHOULD BE DONE TO **ACCOMMODATE** THEIR UNGIVIL LITTLE MINDS.



HAVE I FRIGHTENED YOU, LAME? GOOD! YOU DESERVE TO BE! I WANT YOU TO KNOW WHERE WE STAND! I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU! HERE! WHAT ARE YOU WHISPERING ABOUT, BACK THERE! SOME HYPOCRACY OR OTHER...



A LITTLE GIRL RAISED HER HAND...

WHAT'S... HYPOCRACY?

WE'LL DISCUSS THAT WHEN OUR TWO YOUNG FRIENDS, MASTER ARNOLD AND MASTER BOWERS, EXPLAIN THEIR WHISPERS! WELL, YOUNG MEN...



DONALD BOWERS AROSE...

WE DON'T LIKE YOU! THAT'S ALL WE SAID!

I LIKE FRANKNESS AND TRUTH. THANK YOU FOR YOUR HONESTY, BUT SIMULTANEOUSLY, I DO NOT TOLERATE FLIMPY REBELLION! YOU'LL STAY AN HOUR AFTER SCHOOL, AND WASH THE BOARDS.



AFTER SCHOOL, WALKING HOME, WITH AUTUMN LEAVES FALLING BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER HIS PASSING, MR. HOWARD CAUGHT UP WITH FOUR OF HIS STUDENTS. HE RAPPED HIS CASE SHARPLY ON THE SIDEWALK.

HERE! WHAT ARE YOU CHILDREN DOING? PLAYING ZEPHIRUS? WHAT YOU WERE DOING HERE POISON? WHEN I CAME UP?



THEIR TEACHER'S FACE TWISTED, HE WAS CAREFULLY BENEVOLENT...

POISON? POISON, POISON, PLAYING POISON? WELL, AND NOW DOES ONE PLAY POISON?

WHENEVER WE COME TO A DEAD MAN WE JUMP OVER HIM!



IF YOU JUMP ON A DEAD MAN'S GRAVE, THEN YOU'RE POISONED AND FALL DOWN AND DIE!



DEAD MEN JUMP... POISONED? WHERE DID YOU GET THIS DEAD MAN IDEA?

DEEP ON THIS SQUARE THE NAMES OF THE TWO DEAD MEN?



RIDICULOUS! THOSE ARE THE NAMES OF THE CONTRACTORS WHO MINED AND LAID THE CEMENT SIDEWALK!

EDITH AND CLARA BOTH GIGGLED WILDLY AND TURNED ACCUSING EYES TO THE TWO BOYS.

YOU SAID THEY WERE GRAVE-STONES?



YEAH! THEY ARE! WELL, ALMOST, UNFORTY!

DELIBERATE LIES! FALSIFICATIONS OF THE HIGHEST CALIBRE! THERE'LL BE NO MORE OF THIS... UNDERSTAND?

MR. HOWARD SWUNG OFF DOWN THE STREET.

I HOPE A BIRD DROPS SOMETHING RIGHT smack ON HIS NOSE...



COME ON, CLARA, LET'S PLAY POISON.

IT'S BEEN SPOILED! I'M GOING HOME!

I'M POISONED! LOOK! I'M POISONED! GAH...



OH...

SATURDAY MORNING, MR. HOWARD BLANCED OUT OF HIS FRONT WINDOW AND SWORE WHEN HE SAW ISABEL MAKING CHALK MARKS ON THE SIDEWALK AND THEN HOPPING ABOUT, MAKING A MONODIOUS BING-SONG WITH HER VOICE...



RUSHING OUT, HE ALMOST FLUNG HER TO THE PAVEMENT IN HIS EMOTION. HE GRABBED HER AND SHOOK HER VIOLENTLY AND LET HER GO AND STOOD OVER HER AND THE CHALK MARKS...



BEDRUNK, HE DRAINED THE CHALK MARKS WITH HIS HANDS AND NOSE, MUTTERING...

PENTAGRAMS, RHYMES AND INCANTATIONS... AND ALL LOOKING PERFECTLY INNOCENT. GOD, HOW INNOCENT! YOU LITTLE FIEND!



HE MADE AS IF TO STRIKE HER, BUT STOPPED. ISABEL RAN OFF HOWLING...



MR. HOWARD STALKED BACK INTO THE HOUSE AND POURED HIMSELF A STIFF DRINK OF BRANDY. THE REST OF THE DAY HE HEARD THE CHILDREN PLAYING SIDE-THE-CAR, HIDE-AND-SEEK, OVER-BRIDGE-OVER, JACKS, TOPS, WIGS... AND THE SOUND OF THE LITTLE MONSTERS IN EVERY BRUSH AND BRADDOE WOULD NOT LET HIM REST...



ANOTHER WEEK, THEN... AND THE HATRED GROWING BETWEEN HIM AND THE CHILDREN. THE HATE AND THE FEAR GROWING APEAK...



SUDDENLY THERE WAS A WHITE SKULL AT THE WINDOW.



THE DAYS WENT SHORT. THE NIGHTS CAME TOO SOON. AND THEN, THEY STARTED WORKING ON THE WATER-MAIN OUTSIDE MR. HOWARD'S HOUSE...

GOOD LORD! THAT'S ALL I NEEDED...



CHILDREN LOVE EXCAVATIONS, HIDING PLACES, PIPES AND CONDUITS AND TRENCHES. THEY WERE EVER ACCESSIBLE OVER AND ON AND DOWN AND UP OUT OF THE HOLES WHERE THE NEW PIPES WERE BEING LAID. MR. HOWARD HAD TO CONTINUALLY CHASE THEM.

I TOLD YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM THERE! NOW, GO ON! GO ON HOME!

AND...



IT WAS EIGHT O'CLOCK OF A THURSDAY EVENING. IT HAD BEEN A LONG WEEK, WITH ANGRY FLAMES AND ACCUSATIONS. BUT NOW IT WAS FINISHED, THANK THE LORD, AND TOMORROW THE WORK-MEN WOULD SHOVEL IN THE EARTH... INTO THE DEEP WATER-MAIN EXCAVATION... AND THEY'D TAMP IT DOWN AND PUT IN A NEW CEMENT SIDEWALK...

...AND THOSE HORRIBLE LITTLE BEASTS WILL GO AWAY. THEN... MAYBE...



THERE WAS A WHITE SKULL AT THE WINDOW!

GOOD LORD!



THERE COULD BE NO DOUBT THAT A BOY'S HAND HELD THE SKULL AGAINST THE GLASS... TAPPING AND MOVING IT. THERE WAS A CHILDLIKE TITTLING FROM OUTSIDE...

HEY, YOU!



MR. HOWARD HURST FROM THE HOUSE. HE EXPLODED INTO THE MOUTH OF THE THREE RUNNING BOYS. HE LEAPED AFTER THEM, SHOOTING AND TELLING...



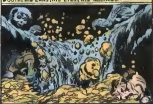
THE STREET WAS DARK, BUT HE SAW THE FIGURES GART BEYOND AND BELOW HIM. HE SAW THEM SORT OF BOUND AND COULDN'T REMEMBER THE REASON FOR THIS, UNTIL, TOO LATE...



THE EARTH OPENED UNDER HIM AND HE FELL INTO THE PIT, HIS HEAD TAKING A TERRIFIC BLOW FROM A LAD WATER PIPE.



AND AS HE LOST CONSCIOUSNESS, HE HAD AN IMPRESSION OF AN AVALANCHE, SET OFF BY HIS FALL, DASHING DOWN COOLINGST PELLETS OF DIRT UPON HIS PANTS, HIS SHOES, UPON HIS COAT, UPON HIS SPINE, UPON THE BACK OF HIS NECK, HIS HEAD, FILLING HIS MOUTH, HIS EARS, HIS EYES, HIS NOSEHOLE.



THE NEIGHBOR LADY WITH THE EGGS WRAPPED IN A NAPKIN KNOCKED ON MR. HOWARD'S DOOR THE NEXT DAY FOR FIVE MINUTES, WHEN SHE OPENED THE DOOR, FINALLY, AND WALKED IN, SHE FOUND NOTHING BUT SPECULES OF GUS MUST FLOATING IN THE BUNNY AIR, AS SHE AND MANY TIMES IN THE FOLLOWING YEARS...



AND ADULTS, BEING WHAT THEY ARE, NEVER OBSERVANT, PAID NO ATTENTION TO THE CHILDREN PLAYING POISON IN THE FOLLOWING AUTUMN. EVEN WHEN THE CHILDREN LEAPED OVER ONE PARTICULAR SQUARE OF CEMENT, TURNED AROUND, AND GLANCED AT THE MARKS ON IT WHICH READ...



E.C. FANS!

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MAGAZINES! LOOK FOR...**



**ANOTHER
"NEW TREND"
ENTERTAINING COMIC!**

**ON SALE NOW
AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!**

LAST ASSIGNMENT

There was a fellow in the pressroom today ... said he was a friend of Brian Conrad, just thought he'd drop in on him. Well, I told the fellow that Conrad didn't work on the Daily Chronicle anymore! He asked for more information about Conrad's whereabouts or forwarding address. I told the fellow that Conrad had walked out of here, camera in hand, on an assignment and never bothered to come back. I knew ... I was on that assignment with him. That was five months ago!

The paper has changed a lot since then! In fact, Conrad was responsible for building up its circulation with his sensational on-the-spot photos! Remember that picture of the bloody killing in Maloney's Tavern? A taxi driver had his face blasted away with a shot-gun by a fellow hoolie. Seems they had argued over a fare. Well, Conrad stood on the bar and snapped a "bomb-right shot" of the whole mess on the floor.

Then there was the time the police pulled that blue and blooded "looter" out of the river! The corpse's features were all distorted by the expansion of gases formed by decomposing tissue. The bullet-hole between its bulging eyes had enlarged to the size of a half-dollar. But nothing bothered Conrad! He told me the "looter's" skin peeled off in the police crew's gloves when they lifted the fish-bitten body out of the river.

I guess there's a bit of inhuman streak in all of us that allows us to be exhilarated by a vicious sacrifice. I'd see the men in the printing room turning the front page at every angle soon as it came off the press. One of Conrad's "gems" usually crowded the mast-head! Maybe I'm just old ... but I've seen fellow soldiers die in a Japanese prison camp in the last war, just before they expired, they'd creep away to a secluded part of the barracks. A man likes to die with some semblance of human dignity.

Then there was that terrible explosion at the gunpowder plant! Conrad took pics through the acid smoke. Those poor, tormented, supplicating human torches ran out of the inferno and collapsed to charred heaps on the ground before him. Conrad always had a cast-iron stomach. Well, he talked the editor

into playing up this particular photo... read HIGH Said it would give impetus to a new safety program for plants manufacturing explosives.

When Conrad wasn't covering suicides, stabbings, murders, and crawling under wrecked trains, his attention was occupied by lovely Erica Williams, the society editor on the Chronicle. Most people said they made a strange pair, what with her latest fashions and social teas and his penchant for violence and sensationalism. It was like the mingling of her soap-and-water-goodness with developing fald and formaldehyde.

The last time I saw Conrad, I was sipping hot coffee with him in the pressroom. We were alone and he was telling me the morbid details of all the deaths and disasters he had covered. He was quivering excitedly as he had one chill December morning when we watched a young medical student ease himself off the window ledge on the tenth floor of a mid-town hotel. The distraught youth had been dependent ever drinking a physiology exam. As the boy's falling body twisted through the air between the abandoned, lifeless ledge and the hotel marquee, the early morning blasts wrapped me in an icy despair. And just as the body rebounded off the marquee, Conrad's omnipresent camera mercifully blinded me with its flashing bulb. Conrad would have been sorely disappointed if the boy had changed his mind.

Erica Williams entered the pressroom. I watched the crisp sweep of her black tulle dress and the fluorescent lights shimmering off her matching jacket with its embroidered collar and cuffs. A little black velvet cloche hugged her carefully arranged blonde hair. Conrad greeted her with a chuck under her chin. She smiled warmly. He almost seemed human... for once. He walked Erica outside to where her convertible was parked. She was off to one of her social events. Conrad came inside again and we drank some more coffee... in silence. Then I got a tip from police headquarters... a bad head-on collision involving two cars on Main Street!

When Conrad and I arrived at the crash, spectators were pointing up at a telephone pole nearby. We pushed through the crowd instinctively. Conrad raised his camera, pointing it at a body that had been hurled there by the impact of the crash. The victim had been impaled beneath the chin by an iron climbing spike on the side of the pole.

Conrad lowered his camera. The victim's hair was blonde... and a little black velvet cloche held it neatly in place!



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THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Not only did I get shotted out of 40% of my income for the annual "who-owns-what", this time, but a late communique from the home-office informs me that my later editors have requested (REQUESTED!) That's a laugh! They're standing next to me with lightning! (the rest of my income for a "grave digger", or some such rat! As before I get my head split open, here they are! Grumble... grumble!

Our eternal gratitude for your most glorious acceptance, dear V. E. I. B. we may say again, we'd like to bring to the attention of you readers a condition existing in the comic industry which you are probably not aware of! In the past, we have always tried to make you feel that you are all a personal part of the E. C. family. We have earnestly attempted to play things straight and honest with you, and have brought our problems to you when they arose. What we have now is a very serious problem! Every few years, the comic industry "collapses"! The last big collapse was early in 1955. Several publishers went out of business, most others dropped titles, changed titles, or temporarily suspended operations. At that time, we at E.C. completely revised our line, and started from scratch with our "new trend" comics. For the last three years, you readers have been good to us! We have prospered, grown, and now publish 18 bi-monthlies. We were highly successful in loans, subscriptions, and then in war comics. Our success led to other publishers looking the stands with their noses, and, and war comics... leading the stands to expect that in September 1958, there were over 300 different comic books being published! An incredible total... an impossible total! Although more comic magazines are being sold today than ever before, the total sales cannot support 300 titles. So the inevitable happened! Last March, the comic industry began to collapse again under the weight of this impossible number of titles. At this writing, (early October), the field is filled with rumors of

publisher after publisher either going out of business or dropping titles! Money is being lost in great piles by virtually everyone in the field! Why are we breaking you, our readers, with all this? Two reasons: First, to thank you! E.C. is a small outfit, we could easily go. Our capital reserves is relatively small! IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THE FAITHFUL ISSUE AFTER ISSUE BUYING WANT OF YOU READERS, E.C. WOULD HAVE GONE DOWN THE DRAIN! For this... your loyalty and continued readership... we sincerely and sincerely thank you. As V.E. would put it, "We're all choked up!" Secondly, we are telling you all this because we want to ask a favor. There are STILL over 120 titles on the stands, and will be for some months! It takes time to drop a title! Thus far, although we're losing money on some of our titles, E.C. is standing firm, and we are continuing to publish all 18 magazines! The fewer! Simply this. KEEP BUYING E.C. MAGAZINES! Please don't misunderstand. We don't want a single reader to spend a single dime that he spends for anything important on an E.C. mag. But if you're PLANNING to spend that dime on a comic mag, make it on E.C.! More than ever before, we need your business! We need your business to stay in business! *

Before closing, just a word about RAY BRADBURY. America's top horror and sci-fi writer... who, as most of you probably know by now, has given E.C. permission to adapt some of his best stories. My E.C.'s forthcoming horror tale, LET'S PLAY POISON, appears in this issue. Subscriptions to my E.C. mag will get you back \$50... or there... full year's supply... monthly or irregular. Please keep writing... your letters immediately for more and keep us on our toes to give you the best! Address for mail and/or subscriptions is

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1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, L. L. Pub. Co. Inc., 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.; Editor, Albert R. Foldvart, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.; Managing Editor, William M. Garza, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.; Business Manager, Frank D. Lee, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.
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(Signed) FRANK D. LEE, Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of September, 1958.

Ernest De Stefano, Notary Public. (My commission expires March 30, 1964.)

[SEAL]

THE VAULT-KEEPER'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

HEN, HEN! WELL, I SEE IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER IDIOTIC INFANTILE INSANITY... ANOTHER CHILDISH CHILLER... ANOTHER SHIMPY FAIRY TALE! I'VE CHOSEN A DELICIOUS ONE FOR YOU THIS TIME... ONE THAT OUGHT TO TICKLE YOUR NISS! IT'S CALLED...

A Sock for Christmas



ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG, LONG AGO... IN A HUGE BEAUTIFUL CASTLE, THERE LIVED A KING, HIS QUEEN, AND THEIR ONLY SON, THE ROYAL PRINCE NOW, SINCE THE YOUNG PRINCE WAS THEIR ONLY SON AND HEIR TO THE THRONE, THE ROYAL COUPLE SPOILED THE BOY! WHATEVER PRINCE TARTY... FOR THAT WAS HIS NAME... WANTED, HE RECEIVED! WHATEVER HE DID WAS NEVER WRONG! AS THE KING PUT IT...

TARTY IS THE ROYAL PRINCE! HE CAN DO NO WRONG!

THE YOUNG PRINCE PUSHED ME INTO THE CASTLE MOAT, YOUR MAJESTY! IF HE WERE MY CHILD, I'D WHIP HIM BLACK AND BLUE FOR...

WELL, HE'S NOT YOUR CHILD! HE'S THE ROYAL PRINCE! THE ROYAL PRINCE DOES NOT GET WHIPPED! UNDERSTAND?

Y-YES, YOUR MAJESTY! THANK YOU, YOUR MAJESTY!

HMPH! THE NERVE OF HIM SUGGESTING THAT I WHIP DEAR TARRY!

WELL, TRYING! ACTUALLY, THE BOY DESERVES A WHIPPING! HE RUINED THE PRIME MINISTER'S NEW OUTFIT!

TOO BAD! IF THE PRIME MINISTER IS SO ANNOYED TO WHIP SOMEONE, LET HIM WHIP HIS OWN CHILD.

BUT IT WAS TARRY WHO...



200000, WHAT? I'VE GOT IT! I'VE GOT THE ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEM! COME WITH ME, TARRY!

TRYING! WHERE ARE YOU GOING...



THE KING ORDERED HIS COACH! THEN, HE AND THE YOUNG PRINCE DROVE DOWN FROM THE CASTLE INTO THE PEASANT VILLAGE FAR BELOW...

MAKE WAY... MAKE WAY...

IT'S THE KING!

...AND THE PRINCE!

THE COACH THE IS STOPPING!



THE KING POKED HIS HEAD OUT OF THE COACH AND SCANNED THE SEA OF FACES BEFORE HIM! SUDDENLY, HE POINTED...

YOU! COME HERE!

HE POINTS TO THE BAKER'S CHILD!

WHAT DOES HE WANT WITH HIM?



THE KING STARED DOWN AT THE SMALL BOY BEFORE HIM... THEN AT PRINCE TARRY... THEN AT THE BOY AGAIN! WITH A GRUNT OF SATISFACTION, HE NODDED...

YES? VERY GOOD! VERY GOOD! WHERE IS YOUR FATHER OR MOTHER, YOU RABBITHUFF?

I AM THE BOY'S FATHER, YOUR MAJESTY! WHAT... WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH HIM?



THE BOY IS COMING WITH ME TO THE CASTLE! HE WILL LIVE THERE... AS PRINCE TARRY'S COMPANION!

NO! NO! HE IS MY SON! YOU CANNOT TAKE HIM FROM ME!



WOULD YOU DENY YOUR SON THE ADVANTAGES I CAN OFFER HIM? GOOD FOOD? GOOD CLOTHES? AN EDUCATION?

W-HO! BUT... BUT...



THE COACH DOOR SWINGS OPEN... SET ON, NOW! I COMMAND YOU!

THE KING ORDERS YOU, MY SON!

NO... SON... FATHER... SON... NO...



THE BOY'S FATHER PUSHED HIS YOUNGEST SON INTO THE COACH...

DO NOT GIVE, SON! IT IS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD! WILL WE BE ABLE TO SEE HIM AGAIN, YOUR MAJESTY?

AT CHRISTMAS! HE WILL LET HIM COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS! FALL RIGHT, CO. ADMIRAL!

MAKE WAY! MAKE WAY!



THE BAKER'S SON WAS TAKEN TO THE CASTLE! BUT WHEN HE ARRIVED, HE SOON FOUND OUT THAT THERE WAS MORE TO IT THAN JUST BEING SPOILED PRINCE TARRY'S COMPANION! THERE WAS A CAUTION...

...AND FROM NOW ON, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COURT, WHEN PRINCE TARRY IS ASLEEP, HE IS TO BE FURNISHED! BUT... YOU WILL NOT WHIP PRINCE TARRY! YOU WILL WHIP HIS COMPANION HERE! YOU WILL WHIP PRINCE TARRY'S WHIPPING BOY!



AND SO, THE FIRST WHIPPING-BOY CAME INTO BEING! THE POOR BAKER'S SON BECAME PRINCE TARRY'S WHIPPING SUBSTITUTE! ANYTIME TARRY WAS SAD, THE WHIPPING-BOY WAS PUNISHED...

SORRY, SON... THAT WAS... UMMS... WRONG OF YOU... UMMS... TO PUT THE... UMMS... CAT... INTO... UMMS... THE OVER, TARRY!

YES, ROYAL CHEF! YES, ROYAL CHEF!



NOT ONLY WAS THE WHIPPING-BOY THRASHED FOR PRINCE TARRY'S MISDOINGS! THERE WERE OTHER SUBSTITUTIONS...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU HATE BATHS? YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE A BATH? NOW, COME ON...

JUST ONE MOMENT, ROYAL WASHMEN! OH, WHIPPING-BOY...

YES... PRINCE TARRY!



THE WHIPPING-BOY WAS MADE TO SUBSTITUTE FOR ALL OF THE PRINCE'S DISTASTEFUL RESPONSIBILITIES...

SPINACH IS GOOD FOR YOU! YOU MUST EAT YOUR SPINACH, PRINCE TARRY!

YES, ROYAL DIETITIAN! OR... WHIPPING-BOY!

PASS ME YOUR PLATE... CHOKO... PRINCE TARRY.



SUMMER PASSED, AND FALL CAME TO THE KINGDOM! AND WITH IT CAME...

GO TO SCHOOL? I HATE SCHOOL! THE ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY WILL ATTEND SCHOOL FOR ME, ROYAL TUTOR! ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY

YES, PRINCE TARRY! WHEN DO I START, ROYAL TUTOR?

TOMORROW MORNING, ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY! EIGHT O'CLOCK!



AND SO, THE WHIPPING-BOY EVEN HAD TO GO TO SCHOOL FOR PRINCE TARRY! THERE WASN'T ANYTHING THAT PRINCE TARRY DISLIKED THAT HE HAD TO DO! THE ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY DID THEM ALL...

YOUR ROOM IS A DISMORSE, PRINCE TARRY! YOU'VE ALL OVER CLEAN IT UP!

ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY...



BUT WORST OF ALL WAS WHEN PRINCE TARRY WAS BAD ON PURPOSE... JUST TO SEE THE WHIPPING-BOY RECEIVE THE WHIPPING...

AND I HOPE THIS TEACHES YOU, YOU A... LESSON, YOUNG MAN!



FINALLY, WINTER CAME NEAR! THE FIRST SNOW BLANKETED THE CASTLE AND THE CASTLE GROUNDS...

IT'S ALMOST CHRISTMAS TIME, PRINCE TARRY! SOON I WILL SEE MY MOTHER AND FATHER AGAIN...

...AND SANTA CLAUS WILL COME AND FILL MY STOCKING AND BRING ME PRESENTS!



...AND SANTA CLAUS WILL FILL MY STOCKING AND BRING ME PRESENTS!

NO, NO! LISTEN TO THE WHIPPING-BOY! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT SANTA CLAUS DOESN'T BRING THINGS TO BAD LITTLE BOYS?



BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN BAD! I...

YOU'VE BEEN FINISHED, HAVEN'T YOU? I'VE SEEN IT! I'VE SEEN YOU WHIPPED A DOZEN TIMES OR MORE A WEEK! ONLY BAD LITTLE BOYS GET WHIPPED! I DON'T GET WHIPPED! I'M GOOD! SANTA WILL VISIT ME... NOT YOU!



FINALLY, ON THE DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, A COACH
BROUGHT THE BAKER'S BOY...THE WHIPPING-BOY...
DOWN FROM THE CASTLE TO THE VILLAGE PAR-
SONAGE...TO THE CHILD'S MOTHER AND FATHER...



MY BABY!
MY BABY!

MY SON!

MOMMY!
DADDY!
SON-
SON-

I'LL BE
BACK TO
PICK HIM
UP TOMOR-
ROW MORNING!

SOON, HE'D TOLD HIS MOTHER AND FATHER ALL
ABOUT THE CASTLE AND WHY THE KING HAD
BROUGHT HIM THERE...

AND SO, IF HE'S BAD,
I GET WHIPPED FOR HIM!
BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE
ME BAD, DOES IT, FATHER
MOTHER?

OF COURSE THE
NOT, MY
CHILD!



THEIR SANTA CLAUS
WILL FILL MY STOCK-
INGS... AND HE WILL
BRING ME PRESENTS!

WELL, OF
COURSE
WE
SON!
WHY
SHOULDN'T
HE?

BECAUSE, PRINCE
TARTY SAID SANTA
WOULDN'T! HE
SAID THAT BAD
LITTLE BOYS GET
WHIPPED, AND
SINCE I GOT
WHIPPED...

NEVER YOU
MIND, MY
SON! GO,
HANG UP
A STOCK-
ING...
THE BIGGEST
ONE YOU
CAN FIND!



AND SO, WITH TEARS OF JOY
STREAMING DOWN HIS LITTLE FACE,
THE ROYAL WHIPPING-BOY HUNG
UP A LARGE THREEDARE STOCK-
ING...

HERMIE! YOU
KNOW WE HAVE NO
MONEY! HOW
COULD WE

HUSH,
SUSSENNANNA!
THE BOY WILL
HEAR YOU!



THEN HE CUMBED INTO HIS BED AND FELL FAST
ASLEEP...A PAINT SMILE ON HIS TEAR-STAINED FACE.

HOW COULD YOU PROMISE THE
BOY, HERMIE! YOU KNOW
HE'S BROKE! HOW HE'LL
EXPECT SANTA CLAUDE TO
FILL HIS STOCKING AND
GIVE HIM PRESENTS!

THE KING SHOULD
DO IT, SUSSENNANNA!
THE KING SHOULD
DO IT! AFTER ALL
THAT BOY'S BEEN
THROUGH...



...HE SWEET IT TO HIM!
THE KING SHOULD
FILL HERVIE'S
STOCKING! AND I'M
GOING TO ASK
HIM TO...

HERMIE! COME BACK!
HE'LL LAUGH AT YOU!
HE'LL LAUGH AT YOU!





THE BOY SKIPPED AND DANCED AS HE LED HIS SLEEPY-EYES PARENTS TO THE FILE OF EARLY WRAPPED PARCELS...



WHAT DOES IT SAY, HERRIMER?

IT SAYS "MERRY CHRISTMAS, MELVIN! SINCE YOU WERE THE PRINCE'S WHIPPING-BOY, YOU DESERVE HIS PRESENTS!" AND THERE'S ONE FOR YOUR DADDY, TOO... JUST WHAT HE ASKED FOR! AND IT'S SIGNED... "SANTA CLAUS!"

INDEED, THERE WAS A PRESENT FOR THE WHIPPING-BOY'S DADDY... BUT IT WAS NOT QUITE WHAT HE'D EXPECTED! THE STOCKING HANGING OVER THE SUFTY OLD FIRE PLACE, BULGED STRANGELY! IT WAS RED AND STICKY AND A SCARLET STREAM DRIPPED FROM THE HOLE IN ITS TOE TO THE WORN HEARTH...



YES... HERRIMER HAD WANTED THE KING TO FILL MELVIN'S STOCKING, SO SANTA HAD GIVEN HIM WHAT HE WANTED...



HEH, HEH! YES, KIDDIEST! MELVIN'S STOCKING WAS FILLED BY THE KING... JUST BY PIECE! BURN! THAT'S THE IDEA OF MY LITTLE FAIRY TALE! NOW, WHEN YOU GET UP ON CHRISTMAS MORNING AND LOOK AT WHAT YOUR STOCKING IS FILLED WITH, DON'T BE SURPRISED AT WHAT YOU FIND!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLO! GREETINGS, SHOULD? IT'S SNACK TIME IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR ONCE AGAIN! YOUR BEERING RECIPE, AUSTLE-UPPER, THE OLD WITCH IS READY TO DISH OUT ANOTHER DELICIOUS DELIRIUM DELVING! SO COME IN... CRAWL UP TO THE FIRE... TUCK YOUR BROOD-CUPS UNDER YOUR PLABBY CHINS... FASTEN YOUR SLUMP-SHOULDS AROUND YOUR SCRAWNY NECKS... AND I'LL SERVE YOU THE SARRY-DRAT FERNIE SPECIAL FOR TODAY CALLED...

PICKLED PINTS!

THE SHAME-COVERED DERELICT STOOD ON THE LITTER-STREWN SIDEWALK, STARRING WITH BLOOD-SHOT EYES INTO THE BOWERY BAR WINDOW? HIS NE WIGGUS PADDERS WERE THRUST DEEP INTO THE POCKETS OF HIS SHARRY PANTS, FEELING HOPEFULLY FOR COINS WHICH HE KNEW WERE NOT THERE! BEHIND HIM, A WELL-DRESSED MAN STUDIED THE SEEDY CHARACTER, WATCHING HIM LICK HIS DRIED AND CRACKED LIPS THIRSTILY.

HOW'D YOU LIKE A
DRINK, BUDDY?

HOW? WHAT
ME? YOU
OFFERIN' ME
A DRINK?

THE WELL-DRESSED MAN EDGED CLOSER TO THE GOWN-AND-OUTER.

NO! I'M NOT OFFERIN' YOU A **DRINK**. I'M OFFERIN' YOU A **CHARGE** THAT'S **TEN BUCKS** SO YOU CAN **BUT** **YOUR OWN**.

TEN BUCKS? THAT'S ALOT OF **DOUGH**. WHAT'S THE **CATCH**?

NO CATCH! IT ONLY TAKES A **FEW MINUTES**. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BECOME A **BLOOD-DONOR**.

A... A **WHAT**?

BLOOD-DONOR? GO TO THIS ADDRESS... DONATE A **PINT OF BLOOD**... AND THEY'LL PAY YOU **TEN BUCKS**. THERE'S **NOTHING** TO IT!

SIMME! SIMME! THE ADDRESS?

TEN MINUTES LATER, THE BOWERY DERELICT HAD CLIMBED THE RICKETY STAIRS OF THE ARGENT LOFT BUILDING AND ENDED ON THE SCARRED AND BATTERED DOOR...

YES, SIR? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I... I GOT THIS ADDRESS... FROM... FROM SOME GUY? HE SAID I COULD MAKE **TEN BUCKS** HERE IF... IF...

OR, YES? OF COURSE! YOU WANT TO DONATE A **PINT OF BLOOD**? COME IN! I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A **MOMENT**. JUST AS SOON AS I'VE FINISHED WITH **THIS GENTLEMAN**...

S-SURE! OKAY! I'LL WAIT!

ON A SOILED COT, ANOTHER POORLY-DRESSED, WHITE-FACED BOWERY CHARACTER LAY, WATCHING THE TINY STREAM OF RED LIQUID PULSATE INTO THE BAR THAT STOOD ON THE TABLE BESIDE HIM.

HELLO, JACK! THIRTY-TEN BUCKS I EVER MADE? RUSHIN' TO IT? RUSHIN' AT ALL...

NO TALKING, PLEASE!

FINALLY, THE ALCOHOL-SATURATED CHARACTER ON THE COT WAS FINISHED. HE GOT UP AND STAGGERED TOWARD THE DOOR.

HERE'S YOUR **TEN DOLLARS**, SIR! NOW **DON'T FORGET**! EAT A **GOOD MEAL** AND TAKE IT EASY TONIGHT!

YEH... YAH... YEH.



HEL, HEE! NOW THERE'S A NEW
RACKET, EH, RICHER? FEW BUCKS
FOR A PINT OF BLOOD! WHY
EVERYONE KNOWS THAT PR-
VATE BLOOD BANKS PAY OWNERS
UP TO THIRTY AND FORTY DOLLARS
FOR A PINT OF BLOOD! THAT IS,
HEALTHY GONORS! MEN LIKE
THESE DOWN-AND-OUTERS
WOULD NEVER BE ALLOWED TO
GIVE BLOOD TO LEGITIMATE
BLOOD BANKS.



THAT NIGHT... IN THE GRABBY
LOFT BUILDING OFFICE WITH THE
DIRTY COAT...



WELL, CAL? HOW'S NINETEEN
PINTS? WE DO TODAY?

AT THIRTY BUCKS A
PINT THAT'S THREE
HUNDRED AND
EIGHTY BUCKS
PROFIT! WEL, BEN!
NOT BAD! NOT
BAD!

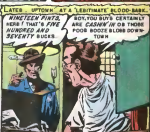


ONE
HUNDRED
PIECES!
I'LL SAY
IT ISN'T
BAD. FOR
A DAY'S
WORK!



AND WE'RE NOT BREAKING ANY
LAWS! IF A GUY WANTS TO SELL
US SOME OF HIS BLOOD, HE'S
NOT A PERFECT RIGHT ID...
AND WE'VE GOT A PERFECT
RIGHT TO BUY IT.

I'LL PACK THE
DAYS TAKE AND
YOU CAN BRING
IT UPTOWN!



LATER... UPTOWN AT A LEGITIMATE BLOOD-BANK.
NINETEEN PINTS,
HERE! THAT'S FIVE
HUNDRED AND
SEVENTY BUCKS.

NOT, YOU GUYS CERTAINLY
ARE CASHIN' IN ON THOSE
FOUR BUCKS SLOW DOWN-
TURN



DO WHAT IS YOU'RE MAKIN'
FEW BUCKS A PINT FOUR-
SELF, HERE! THE HOS-
PITALS PAY YOU FORTY
BUCKS A PINT! AND IT'S
GRABBY! WE DO ALL THE
WORK!

I'M NOT COMPLAININ',
WARREN! I'D PAY A
PRIVATE DONOR WHAT
I PAY YOU! I'M NOT
COMPLAININ'!



MEANWHILE, ON THE BOWERY, WORD WAS SPREADING
FEW BUCKS! JUST LIKE... AN' YOU
THAT? ALL YOU DO ISH... LAY THERE...
DO THERE... AN' THEN... AN' THEN
SHOOT A NEEDLE... YOU'RE
INTO YOUR ARM... FINISHED...
AND THEY
GIVE YOU
THE DOWNY!

WHAT'S
NUMBER
OF THE
JOINT
NOW?

IT WAS LIKE TAKING CANDY FROM BABIES. THE WAY CAL AND WARREN COLLECTED PINTS OF BLOOD FROM THE POOR DRUNKARDS, ALCOHOLICS, DELINCTS, AND OTHER UNFORTUNATES WHO HUNG AROUND THE BOWERY (AND TO THE UNFORTUNATES, IT WAS EASY MONEY... ANOTHER WEEK OF EXISTING... ANOTHER BOTTLE OR TWO

I WANNA GIVE A PINT OF BLOOD? I COULD USE THE MONEY!

DIDN'T YOU SAVE A PINT ALREADY? YOU LOOK FAMILIAR!

WHO? ME? NOT ME? ALL RIGHT? MUSTA BEEN SOME OTHER GUY? NOT ME? LIE ON THE GUY?



AND SO THEY STARTED TO COME BACK... TIME AND AGAIN, WHENEVER THEIR TEN DOLLARS WOULD RUN OUT... TO GIVE ANOTHER PINT... TO BUY ANOTHER QUART.

WARREN? THERE'S A BUM ON THERE WHO'S GIVEN THREE TIMES THIS MONTH ALREADY!

SO WHAT? HE WANTED TO KILL HIMSELF, IT AIN'T MY AFFAIR, IS IT? SENGES

WHO'S GONNA MISS HIM WHEN HE GROANS, ANYWAY? HUNT ED AHEAD? TAKE IT FROM HIM!

I... WELL, ALL RIGHT, WARREN, JUST AS YOU SAY



THE MONEY ROLLED IN FOR WARREN AND CAL... HE'S OUT COLD!

TAKE AN EXTRA PINT! WE'LL NEVER KNOW



AND THEN... ALL RIGHT! STAND BACK! STAND BACK! GIVE HIM AIR!

ISH TOMMY? WASH WASH WASH WASH!

THIS MAN IS DEAD!



WELL, HERE'S SO TRAGEDY FINALLY STRUCK! ONE OF THE POOR UNFORTUNATES, WHO'D GIVEN TOO MUCH OF THE PRECIOUS FLUID THAT FLOWED THROUGH HIS VEINS, HAD DIED! NOW THE BOWERY DERELICTS WERE FRIGHTENED! CAL AND WARREN'S LITTLE OFFICE WAS EMPTY.



HOW ABOUT IT, BUDDY-TEN BUCKS

NOT ME, MISTER! I DON'T WANT TO END UP LIKE TOMMY! ON A SLAB... IN THE MORNING!



CAL AND WARREN BECAME DESPERATE.

WHAT'LL WE DO, WARREN? NOBODY WANTS TO GIVE BLOOD ANYMORE! THEY'RE SCARED!

THEN WE'LL GO OUT AND GET 'EM, CAL! G'MON!



AND SO, CAL AND WARREN, UNDER THE COVER OF DARKNESS, BEGAN TO SEARCH THE BACK ALLEYS AND EMPTY LOTS AROUND SAID ROW.

HERE COMES ONE NOW... HIGHER THAN A FIFE?

QUIET! WAIT UNTIL HE GETS UP TO US... THEN...



CLUNK!



THEY CARRIED THEIR SHAKEN-UP VICTIM BACK TO THE LOFT BUILDING.

EASE, NOW! PUT HIM ON THE GAT!

I DON'T LIKE THIS, WARREN!

STOP YOUR WORRYING, CAL! HE WON'T REMEMBER IF HE CAME HERE UNDER HIS OWN STEAM OR NOT! AFTER YOU'RE THROUGH TAKING HIS BLOOD, SLIP A FIVE SPOT IN HIS POCKET! THEN WE'LL DITCH HIM.

DRAT! BUT I STILL DON'T LIKE IT!



HEE, HEE! NICE SURVIVAL AND
WARREN, H. KIDDEST WHEN THE
DOWN-AND-OUTERS WOULDN'T
COME TO *THEM*. THEY WENT OUT
AND *NOT* 'EM! OF COURSE, BUSI-
NESS WASN'T AS GOOD AS IT
WAS *BEFORE*... BUT IT WAS
BETTER THAN *NOTHING*.



SIX PIPES! IN
THAT ALL THAT'S
UP, WARREN! THE
SUN'S RUN OUT OF
BLOOD!



JUST GIVE ME
THE *DOUGH*,
HERE, AND
FORGET
THE CRACKS!

FINALLY... ONE EVENING... AS IT
WAS SHOWING DARK

ONLY ONE BUM
CAME IN TODAY,
WARREN!

O'MON! LET'S
GO OUT AND
SHANGHAI A
FEW!



AND SO, IN THE GATHERING SHADOWS, WARREN AND
CAL STARTED DOWN THE RICKETY STAIRS OF THE
LOFT BUILDING.

HEY! LOOK!
THAT DOOR,
IT'S OPEN!

I NEVER KNEW ANYBODY
ELSE WAS IN THIS BUILDING!
HELLO IN THERE.



NO ANSWER! ONLY THE PATTERN OF TINY FEET AS A
GREY SHADOW SCURRIED ACROSS THE FLOOR.

WHAT'S THAT, WARREN?
IN THAT BOX?

LOOKS LIKE A *POOP*!
HE'S EITHER SLEEP-
ING OR HE'S OUT
COLD!



HEY, BUDDY! HEY!
WAKE UP!

WE'VE SOUSED! O'MON! GIVE
ME A HAND! WE CERTAINLY
DON'T HAVE TO TRAVEL
FAR FOR OUR FIRST SUCKER
OF THE EVENING!



THEY LIFTED THE UNCONSCIOUS FIGURE FROM THE
WOODEN BOX AND CARRIED HIM OUT OF THE LOFT
AND UP THE RICKETY STAIRS TO THEIR OWN
OFFICE...

UGH! THIS GUY IS
HEAVY!

HE'LL BE
GOOD FOR
THREE
PIPPES AT
LEAST!



BUT THEY NEVER NOTICED THE THIN LAYER OF SOIL IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BOX WHERE THEIR LATEST VICTIM HAD BEEN LYING.



AND JUST AS THE SUN SET BEHIND THE PALM TREES, AS THEY PUT HIM DOWN ON THE SOILED COAT...



"I'LL LOCK THE DOOR! YOU START SETTING UP THE EQUIPMENT..."

"CRAP!"

HE OPENED HIS EYES! HIS BLOWING RED EYES...



"BAST! HUNT'S MATTER! A GOOD LORD!"

HE SPRAWS FROM THE COAT, HIS LIPS DRAWN BACK, REVEALING WHITE, RAZOR-SHARP FANGS...



"WARREN? OH, LORD - IT'S... AAAAAA!"

...AND THE MURKY OLD LOFT BUILDING WAS FILLED WITH MYSTERICAL SOUNDS AS THE VAMPIRE ATTACKED.



WHEN THE POLICE FINALLY CAME TO INVESTIGATE THE HORRIBLE SCREAMS THAT HAD EMANATED FROM THE DUNGY LOFT BUILDING, THEY FOUND WARREN AND CAL... THEIR EYES BULGING IN THEIR BLUE FACES.



"DEAD..."

"EVERY DROP OF BLOOD'S BEEN DRAINED FROM THEIR BODIES!"

HEL, HEL! SO WARREN AND CAL, WHO'D BEEN TAKING BLOOD FROM THE POOR ORPHANS OR SHIRKING ENDS OF WITH-OUT FEAR THEMSELVES? OF COURSE, THE POLICE NEVER FOUND THE VAMPIRE! AFTER ALL! WHO BELIEVES IN VAMPIRES, ANYWAY? HEL, HEL! SO FOMBY THE WAY! I'VE GOT A LARGE WOODEN BOX HEREIN THE 'HAUNT'! IT'S - OR... LIKE TO GET RID OF IT! NOT AN ADDRESS YOU'D LIKE IT. SWAPPED TOP I'LL MAKE SURE IT ARRIVES JUST ABOUT SUN-DOWN! HEL, HEL! BYE NOW! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG. THE HAUNT OF FEAR, SO LOOK FOR US... ENT



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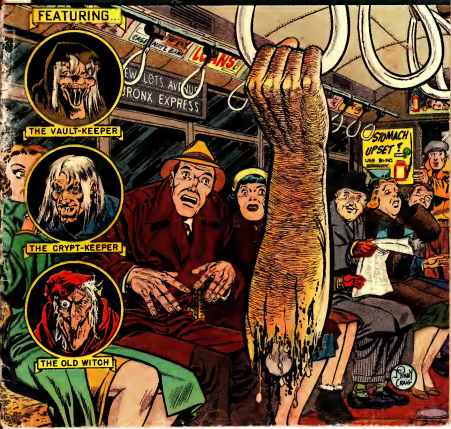
THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH





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THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, HOW HELLO, AGAIN! THIS IS YOUR FRIENDLY STORYTELLER, THE *FACE-KEEPER*, INVITING YOU TO JOIN ANOTHER SESSION OF *GRUESOME GROOMINGS* THAT EMANATE FROM MY FILE AND *PICIOUS HAIR*! SO PLOP YOURSELF DOWN ON THAT SATIN-COVERED COFFIN AND GET COMFY! DON'T MIND THE MOLD AND WORM-HOLES! IT'S *SECOND-HAND*, YOU KNOW! YOU, THERE! PUT DOWN THAT GUN! KILL YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW LATER! AND YOU, WOMAN... *STOP!* YOUR SLEEPING HUSBAND DIDN'T WANT *THAT* CLOSE A SHAVE! AND YOU, YOU FEND! LET THOSE *MATCHES* ALONE! YOUR LITTLE BROTHER'S *POES* CAN WAIT! IN OTHER WORDS, DROP (DEAD, THAT IS!) EVERYTHING YOU'RE DOING, AND LISTEN... LISTEN WHILE I RECOUNT THE HORROR TALE ENTITLED:...

SPLIT PERSONALITY!



THE CLICKING OF THE TELEPHONE GAIL STUTTERED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THE SPARSELY-FURNISHED ROOM. ED KING BRIDLED HIS CHARETTE IN THE ALREADY OVERFLOWING ASH-TRAY AND SOFTLY SLEW-SMOKE RINGS UNTIL HIS PARTY ANSWERED. THEN, BLIS, HONEY-COATED WORDS DRIPPED FROM HIS LIPS, EXTOLLING THE VIRTUES OF THE FREE CHARITY HE SUPPOSEDLY REPRESENTED. HE LISTENED A MOMENT, A SMILE CURLING HIS FACE... AND THEN SPOKE AGAIN, MORE WORDS... HONEY-COATED.

WHY, YOU'RE *MORE* THAN GENEROUS, MRS GALVESTON! THE LITTLE HIGGIES NEED OUR AID SO BADLY! YES. JUST MAIL YOUR DONATION TO PO BOX 749, GARDEN ST STATION! YES! THE CHILDREN BLESS YOU!



TOP-ED KING WAS A CHARITY RACKETEER... A CONMAN...
OUT TO HILK THE GULLIBLE! BUT HE DIDN'T REST ON
PHONE CALLS ALONE... HE WENT FROM DOOR TO DOOR
ALSO, ON THE THEORY THAT A RICK IN THE POCKET IS
WORTH A DOZEN PROMISES OVER THE PHONE...



HAND IT ALL? NO
ANSWER! HATE TO
PASS UP A PRIVATE
HOUSE, BUT I CAN'T
STAY HERE ALL DAY!

OH, NO! JUST ECCENTRIC! THEY NEVER
COME OUT, AND THEY WON'T LET ANYONE
IN! SUCH A SHAME! TWO YOUNG GIRLS,
WITH A FEW ZILLION DUCKS...
AND THEY'RE A COUPLE OF
HERMITS! IT'S A SHAME!



IT
SURE
IS!

HAPPY! JUST MY LUCK!
TEN FEET AWAY FROM A
FORTUNE AND I
CAN'T



WHAT'S
THAT?

AN UNANSWERED DOOR WAS A DONATION LOST, TO ED
KING'S WAY OF THINKING. DISCONTENTED, HE TURNED AND
STARTED DOWN THE STEPS! THE PASSING POSTMAN
STOPPED, GRINNED...

YOU'VE NO CHANCE OF GETTING INTO *THAT* HOUSE,
MISTER! THE BLAIR SISTERS *NEVER* OPEN THE DOOR
TO ANYONE EXCEPT REVEREND MACASK!



OH! WHAT'S THE
MATTER WITH THEM?
THEY GOT THE PLAGUE
OR SOMETHING?

A SERIES OF DISMAY! ED LOOKED UP! A
YOUNG, PRETTY GIRL LEANED FROM THE
TOP FLOOR WINDOW, ANXIOUSLY TRYING
TO COAX A TREED CAT TO SAFETY...

LOOKS LIKE THE CAT IS AFRAID TO
MOVE! I SAY! IF *THAT'S* ONE OF THE
BLAIR SISTERS... MAYBE THIS IS THE
BREAK I NEED!



WITH A THEATRICAL FLOURISH, ED KING STRIPPED OFF
HIS JACKET AND DRAMATICALLY PLUNGED IT TO THE
GROUND! HE ROLLED UP HIS SLEEVE, REVEAL-
ING HIS TANNED, MUSCULAR FOREARMS, AND WITH A BOLD,
DETERMINED EXPRESSION, BRAVELY SHOUTED:



FEAR NOT, FAIR
LADY! I SHALL
SAVE YOUR
KITTY!

DAUNTLESSLY, HE BEGAN CLIMBING THE TREE. TREES
NEVER ~~SEEMED~~ TO BE SO DIFFICULT TO CLIMB WHEN HE
WAS A BOY! SEEMS THEY GREW TALLER NOW. HIS
KNEES WERE SKINNED AND HE WAS CERTAIN BUSTERS
WERE RAPIDLY GROWING ON HIS HANDS, BUT IF HIS
PLAN WORKED, ANYTHING WAS WORTH IT...



HERE, KITTY, KITTY!
NICE KITTY! NICE
KITTY KITTY!

O'HERE, YOU MAMMY-
SHAMMY CAT, OR
I'LL WRING YOUR
NECK!

FOR TWENTY MINUTES, ED STRUGGLED MIGHTILY WITH THE SHARPLING, CLAWING CAT, BUT FINALLY, HIS FACE AND HANDS SCRATCHED AND BLEEDING, HE MAJESTICALLY DELIVERED THE VICIOUS LITTLE BEAST TO ITS GREATLY RELIEVED OWNERS! THE GIRLS DEBATED...



I... I THINK JUST THIS MUCH, AMY, IT WOULD BE PROPER IF WE ALLOWED THIS MAN TO ENTER! AFTER ALL...

WELL... PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, SUSAN! HE *DID* RESCUE OUR CAT... AND HE SEEMS IN NEED OF SOME FIRST-AID, SO...

FOR PETE'S SAKE, A GUY COULD BLEED TO DEATH WHILE THEY DELIBERED THE INTRICACIES OF THEIR MORAL CODE! BUT THEY RELUCTANT... AND A SHORT TIME LATER, OLD 'HORSE-TONGUE' WAS HAVING *TEA*...



I TRUST YOUR WOUNDS FEEL BETTER NOW, MR. KING!

OH, INDEED YES, MY DEAR MISS BLAIR! YOUR SOOTHING MEDICATIONS HAVE EASED THE PAIN A GREAT DEAL! AND... IF I MAY SAY SO... THE *TEA* IS *DELICIOUS*!

NATURALLY, ED SLYLY MOVED THE CONVERSATION AROUND UNTIL...



YES, SUSAN AND I HAVE EQUAL SAY OVER OUR WEALTH! HALF AND HALF!

SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE, YOU KNOW! HA! HA! HA!

HE REMAINED FOR SEVERAL HOURS, EXOTING THEM WITH MYTHICAL TALES OF HIS HEROIC DEEDS, AND COMPLIMENTING THEM ABUNDANTLY!



EDWIN, AMY AND I THINK THAT... WELL, IF YOU SHOULD CARE TO RETURN...

YOU HONOR ME, MY DEAR! I ACCEPT!

HE RETURNED MANY TIMES, AND HE SAT THERE, SIPPING TEA, RELATING STORIES, BESTOWING COMPLIMENTS. THE TWO SISTERS SAT IN OPEN-MOUTHED WONDER AND ADORATION!



OH, AMY! HE'S SO *BALLANT*! SO GENTLEMANLY! AND SO... NO *STORIES*! HE'S SUCH A 'MAN OF THE WORLD'! AND SO *RESPECTABLE*!



SUSAN, TO HEAR YOU TALK, ONE WOULD THINK YOU WERE FALLING IN LOVE WITH HIM!

WHY, AMY? I... I DIDN'T MEAN... THAT IS, PLEASE DON'T... ER... I... I MEAN...

OH, STOP GETTING FLUSTERED! IT'S ALL RIGHT! I UNDERSTAND HOW TO FEEL ABOUT HIM! I FEEL THE SAME WAY! HE... HE IS WONDERFUL, ISN'T HE?



MEANWHILE, IN HIS HOTEL ROOM, THE KING, GENTLE, HONEST, STRONG, BRAVE, NOBLE, RESPECTABLE MAN OF THE WORLD PAGED THE MAID FLOOR NERVOUSLY!

EVERYTHING'S GOING ALONG FINE! I'M SURE I CAN MARRY EITHER ONE OF THEM. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS POP THE QUESTION! AND YET THAT WILL ONLY GIVE ME *HALF* THEM MONEY! THERE MUST BE *SOME* WAY FOR ME TO GET IT *ALL*!



HAND IT! TOO BAD THERE ISN'T TWO OF ME!

TWO OF ME?!



OF COURSE! TWINS!



ON HIS NEXT VISIT, EDWIN EXPLODED THE NEWS OF HIS "TWIN BROTHER"!

A *TWIN BROTHER*? HOW COULD! BUT WHY HAVEN'T WE MET HIM?

HE'S BEEN AWAY! BUT HE'S DUE TO RETURN SOON! IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME TO MENTION IT BEFORE!



YOU SEE, MY TWIN BROTHER AND I OWN SOME VERY IMPORTANT HOLDINGS IN *SOUTH AFRICA*! THE NATURE OF THE WORK DEMANDS THAT *ONE OF US BE THERE AT ALL TIMES*! HE STAYS THERE FOR ONE MONTH, AND I REPLACE HIM UNTIL THE FOLLOWING MONTH, AND SO ON.



I MUST LEAVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA TOMORROW! IN A FEW DAYS, MY BROTHER WILL RETURN HERE, IF I'M NOT BEING TOO FORWARD, I'D LIKE VERY MUCH FOR HIM TO MEET YOU LOVELY GIRL!



WHY, WHY, THAT WOULD BE FINE!

I'VE WRITTEN HIM SO *SOON* ABOUT YOU TWO! HE FEELS HE KNOWS YOU AS WELL AS I! YOU'LL HAVE NO DIFFICULTY RECOGNIZING HIM, BUT STILL, I'LL GIVE HIM A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION!

WHATEVER YOU SAY, EDWIN!

YES? WHATEVER YOU SAY!



FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, EDWIN REMAINED IN HIS HOTEL ROOM. AMY AND SUSAN THOUGHT HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO SOUTH AFRICA, BUT ACTUALLY HE WAS PREPARING FOR HIS "TWIN BROTHER'S" APPEARANCE!

LET'S GET NEW LINEN, NEW CLOTHES! BETTER TAKE A SUN-LAMP TREATMENT TO RENEW MY TAN! SUPPOSED TO BE HOT IN SOUTH AFRICA!



ED LOUNGED ABOUT HIS ROOM FOR A FEW MORE DAYS, AND MADE CERTAIN TIME AND AGAIN THAT ALL WAS IN READINESS! AT LAST, POSING AS HIS NON-EXISTANT BROTHER, HE PRESENTED HIMSELF...



I HOPE I'M NOT OVERSTEPPING MY BOUNDS. I AM ALPHONSO KING. MY BROTHER EDWIN GAVE ME THIS LETTER OF INTRODUCTION...

OF COURSE, ALPHONSO! WE RECOGNIZED YOU IMMEDIATELY! DO COME IN!

ONCE AGAIN THE TWO MARVE BLAIN SISTERS SAT IN ADMIRATION AS OLD BLUE-LIPS TURNED ON THE CHARM.

I FEEL I ~~MUST~~ SAY THAT YOU ARE BOTH, INDEED, EVERYTHING EDWIN SAID YOU WERE! I FEEL AS IF I'VE KNOWN YOU FOR YEARS!

OH, ALPHONSO! THAT'S JUST WHAT EDWIN SAID! HOW NICE!



ISN'T IT GRAND? ALPHONSO AND EDWIN ARE SO IDENTICAL!

THAT... THAT MAKES ONE FOR EACH OF US, DOESN'T IT, SUSAN?

A MONTH LATER, EDWIN CAME BACK, AND THE TIME WAS RIFE...



ANY... THERE COMES A TIME IN EVERY MAN'S LIFE WHEN HE FEELS THE NEED OF FEMALE... ER... COMPANIONSHIP!

OH, EDWIN!

AND SO THEY WERE MARRIED. THE MINISTER FROM THE LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER PERFORMED THE SIMPLE, QUIET CEREMONY...



EDWIN AND MARY I NOW PRODUCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!

(SOS?)

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, MARY LEARNED THE MEANING OF 'MARITAL BLISS' AND SHE CONFIDED IN SUSAN, WHO WAS BECOMING IMPATIENT...



OH, MARY, DO YOU THINK ALPHONSO... I MEAN... OH, YOU KNOW WHAT I WANT TO SAY!

YES, SUSAN, I KNOW! MY EDWIN SAYS HE'S SURE ALPHONSO WILL ASK FOR YOUR HAND AS SOON AS HE RETURNS!

AGAIN EDWIN LEFT FOR SOUTH AFRICA! HE LOOSED ABOUT HIS HOTEL ROOM, RELAXING AND ENJOYING HIMSELF...



HAA! WHAT A SET-UP! I CAN PULL THE WOOL OVER THEIR EYES FOREVER!

AND ABOUT A WEEK LATER, ALPHONSO RETURNED...



SUSAN, THERE COMES A TIME IN EVERY MAN'S LIFE WHEN HE FEELS THE NEED OF FEMALE-ER... COMPANIONSHIP!

OH, ALPHONSO!

AND SO, THEY WERE MARRIED! THE MINISTER FROM THE LITTLE CHURCH AROUND THE CORNER PERFORMED THE SIMPLE, QUIET CEREMONY...



ALPHONSO AND SUSAN, I NOW PRODUCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!

ISOM!

AND IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, SUSAN LEARNED THE MEANINGS OF 'MARITAL BLISS'! AND THEN DID THE TWO SISTERS CONFIDE IN ONE ANOTHER...



OH, AMY, I'M SO HAPPY! ALPHONSO IS SO KIND... AND GENTLE!

IT'S A SHAME BOTH OUR HUSBANDS CAN NEVER BE WITH US AT THE SAME TIME, BUT...



HEH, HEH, HEH! NOW HADN'T OLD ED KING WORKED INTO A TERRIFIC DEAL? TWO HANSEY-MANSEY INNOCENTS FOR WINE, A TRAINLOAD OF MONEY, AND A WEEK'S VACATION FROM THE LITTLE WOMEN EVERY MONTH, NO QUESTIONS ASKED? WOW!

MONTHS PASSED AND THE GRAND HOAX CONTINUED SUCCESSFULLY! BUT ED WAS LOSING HIS SUN-TAN...



BUT, EDWIN! WHY BUY A SUN-LAMP?

SO I CAN KEEP THE TAN I HAVE! I DON'T WANT TO GET A BAD BURN WHEN I RETURN TO SOUTH AFRICA!

EDWIN STRETCHED OUT ON HIS BATH-ROBE AND PROMPTLY FELL ASLEEP. UNKNOWN TO HIM, A SUDDEN GUST OF WIND LIFTED HIS BATH-ROBE SHAW AND VERY GENTLY, ACCIDENTALLY, DRAPED IT ACROSS HIS BACK...



...SO THAT ON AWAKENING, A WIDE STRIP OF WHITE WAS EMBLAZONED THERE. HE NEVER SUSPECTED...



BUT, EDWIN! YOUR BACK!

YES, A LITTLE TOO RED! OVER-SLEPT A LITTLE! FEELS FINE, THOUGH!

NOW WHEN ALPHONSO RETURNED ON THE NEXT SHIFT, SUSAN WAS NATURALLY PLEASED! SHE WAS SO HAPPY TO SEE HIM SHE DIDN'T EVEN THINK TO MAKE A REMARK ABOUT THE WIDE, WIDE STRIP OF WHITE ACROSS HIS BACK.



BUT THE FOLLOWING DAY, WHEN SHE AND ARMY TALKED

... IT WAS SO HUMOROUS, ARMY THERE WAS HIS BROAD BACK, TAN AND RIPPLING WITH MUSCLES... AND THAT WHITE STRIP!

THE REAL I KNOW JUST WHAT YOU MEANT! EDWIN HAD THE SAME UNTANNED STRIP ACROSS HIS BACK! IT IS QUITE COMICAL! HA/HA!



ARMY! (IT CAN'T BE TRUE! IT... IT CAN'T BE!

BUT... BUT SUSAN! IF IT IS... I MEAN... THAT WOULD MEAN...

WHAT A HORRIBLE THOUGHT! OH, I'D BE SO ASHAMED! ANY, WE MUST FIND OUT!

YOU'RE RIGHT, SUSAN! NOW, I THINK I KNOW NOW... LISTEN!



THE NIGHT BEFORE ALPHONSO WAS TO LEAVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA, SUSAN REMAINED AWAKE UNTIL HIS DEEP BREATHING ASSURED HER HE WAS ASLEEP. THEN SILENTLY, SHE REACHED INTO HER NIGHT-TABLE AND BROUGHT FORTH A SMALL BOTTLE OF PERFUMED. SHE DABBED A FEW DROPS ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD, CAUSING THE HAIR TO BLEACH...



THEY? NOW WE'LL SEE!

AS USUAL, A WEEK PASSED BEFORE EDWIN CAME HOME! HE ENTERED HAPPILY, AND AS HE TURNED HIS BACK TO HAND UP HIS HAT, AMY AND SUSAN STARED IN HORROR AT A SMALL WHITE PATCH OF HAIR ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD.



AMY! IT'S TRUE! EDWIN AND ALFONSO ARE THE SAME MAN! WHAT HAS HE DONE TO US?

MERCIFUL HEAVENS! WE'S NOT A TRIM! WE'RE RUINED! HE'S SOILED US FOR LIFE!



THE SHAME! THE SHAME! IT'S SO... SO HORRIBLE! OOOO!

HE'S MADE US, SUSAN MYST! HE TOOK SUCH POUL ADVANTAGE OF US! SUSAN... WE MUST PAY!



YES... YES... HE MUST PAY! HEH, HEH!

Y, AND HE WILL PAY! HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH!



HEH, HEH! SEEMS LIKE EVERYBODY IN THIS STORY MADE AT LEAST ONE MISTAKE! THAT BUN-LAMP REALLY STRIPPED OLD HONEY-MONK OF HIS RACKET! TAN TO ONE HE WON'T DO IT AGAIN! HEH! WHY DO I GIVE SUCH OOOO! HEH, HEH! READ ON... YOU'LL SEE! SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE! REMEMBER!



THE BLOODY JESUS! IN THE HALL-WAY, LEANING AGAINST THE WALL BETWEEN THE TWO BEDROOMS AND IF YOU WERE TO PEER BEHIND THE CLOSED BEDROOM DOORS, YOU WOULD SEE AMY IN HER BED, LAPRESSING HER SIDE OF EDWIN, AND SUSAN DOING LIKEWISE WITH HER SIDE OF HIM! FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME THE TWO SHY-INDULGENT THINGWAS ABLE TO ENJOY THE COMPANY OF THEIR HUSBANDS AT THE SAME TIME! FOR, IN THEIR UNBALANCED STATE, THEY HAD SPLIT HIM IN TWO, RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE!



THE END

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELL, HEH! AND NOW, IT'S MY TURN TO SUCKLE YOUR BLOOD. YEP, IT'S YOUR HOST IN THE CRYPT OF TERROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, SMILING... READY TO MARRATE ANOTHER HAUSSEATING NECRMANTY... ANOTHER DELVING INTO THE DELIRIOUS... ANOTHER SPINE-TINGLER, I CALL THIS YELP-YARN FROM MY COLLECTION...

WHO DOUGHNUT?



IT WAS THE SEVENTH ONE INSIDE OF A MONTH. SEVEN WOMEN... MURDERED. THEY STOOD AROUND THE LATEST VOTING'S AWFULLY SPRAWLED. SHALK-WHITE COMFIE.

JUST LIKE THE OTHER ONE, CAPTAIN, WOUNDS ALL OVER HER BODY. THOSE SAME DOUGHNUT-SHAPED WOUNDS. DEAD ABOUT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS!

HERE COMES THAT BLASTED NEWS-SHOOPEN HUSHER, AS IF I DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TROUBLE!



DANNY HUGHES, CRIME REPORTER FOR THE MORNING GLOBE, ELBOWED HIS WAY THROUGH THE SAPING CROWD HELD BACK BY THE UNIFORMED POLICEMEN.

WELL, CAPTAIN! I SEE YOU GUYS ARE RIGHT ON THE JOB... AFTER THE KILLER HAS STRUCK!

OH, SHUT UP, HUGHES. LAY OFF, WILL YOU? WE'RE DOING THE BEST WE CAN!

YEAH, AND MEANWHILE, SEVEN MURDERS HAVE BEEN COMMITTED, AND YOU HAVEN'T EVEN COME UP WITH ONE SUSPECT.

WE'VE COMBED THE BOOKS. WE'VE PULLED IN EVERY SUSPICIOUS-LOOKING SEAMAN WE COULD GET OUR HANDS ON. WE'RE UP A BLIND ALLEY.

THE TROUBLE WITH YOU GUYS IS YOU GET HOLD OF ONE WICKER-ABLE GUY AND YOU WON'T LET IT GO.

LOOK, DANNY! TRACES OF SEA BRINE WERE FOUND ON THE CLOTHES AND SKIN OF EACH VICTIM...

...SO WHO COMES IN CONTACT WITH SEA BRINE? SEAMEN! DOCK WORKERS!

MERMAIDS! LISTEN, CAPTAIN! WHAT ABOUT THE BLOOD? WHAT ABOUT THOSE WOUNDS...

HUGHES POINTED TO THE SEVERAL DOUGHNUT-SHAPED RED WELTS THAT COVERED AN ARM PROJECTING FROM THE SHEET THAT DRAPE THE LATEST VICTIM...

THE BLOOD WAS DRAINED FROM EACH OF THE VICTIMS! DRAINED DRY!

ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE ME THAT VAMPIRE ROUTINE AGAIN?

I'M TELLIN' YOU, VAMPIRES DRAIN THE BLOOD FROM THEIR VICTIMS' BODIES. THOSE ROUND RED WELTS...

THE KILLER OBVIOUSLY BEATS HIS VICTIM WITH SOME SORT OF WEAPON, DANNY! LOOK! VAMPIRES DON'T EXIST, YID! THEY'RE LEGEND... FICTION... COMIC-BOOK STUFF.

ALL RIGHT, YOU STUBBORN IDIOT! YOU KEEP BLUNDERING THE WAY YOU HAVE BEEN AND I'LL KEEP LAM-BASTING YOU IN MY COLUMN UNTIL YOU GET THE MURDERER.

BESIDES! I DO SOME RESEARCH ON VAMPIRES. SMART GUY! THEY SUCK BLOOD BY PIERCING THEIR VICTIMS FIRST... WITH THEIR FANGS. THEY LEAVE TWO NEAT PUNCTURE MARKS IN THEIR VICTIMS' THROATS... NOT DOUGHNUT-SHAPED WOUNDS!



PAT GOT OUT OF THE CAR, AND STAMPED ACROSS THE SIDEWALK TO THE APARTMENT DOOR. SHE STOOD THERE FUMBLING IN HER PURSE FOR HER KEYS. DANNY SHRUGGED AND PULLED AWAY.



"SEE YOU TOMORROW AT THE OFFICE, HONEY!"

"HMMPH!"

AS DANNY SWUNG HIS CAN AROUND THE CORNER, HE NOTICED THE STRANGE-LOOKING FIGURE. COLLAR PULLED UP, HAT-BRIM TURNED DOWN, MOVING ALONG THE DESERTED STREET, HE ESPECIALLY NOTICED THE EYES, BURNING IN THE BLACKNESS OF THE SHADOWED FACE...



"NOW THERE'S A SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER IF I EVER SAW ONE!"

BY THE NEXT MORNING, DANNY'D DECIDED TO APOLOGIZE TO PAT FOR HIS ACTIONS OF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT...



"HEL, WHERE'S PAT, ED?"

"GERRD, DANNY! SHE HASN'T SHOWN UP TODAY!"

BY TEN-THIRTY, DANNY'D STARTED TO WONNY. FINALLY, HE HURRIED TO HIS CAR AND SPED CROSS-TOWN TO PAT'S APARTMENT...



"SOMETHING'S WRONG! I CAN FEEL IT!"

POLICE CARS LINED THE STREET AN ARMILANCE, NOT NEEDED, WAS JUST PULLING AWAY AS DANNY DROVE UP...



"WHAT HAPPENED?"

"ANOTHER MURDER!"

IT WAS PAT! SHE WAS DEAD! SHE LAY IN THE LOBBY COVERED WITH THE PREVITABLE WHITE SHEET.



"GOOD LORD! NOT LAST NIGHT WHEN I LEFT HER..."

"YOU GOT SOME EXPLAINING TO DO, DANNY! A LOT OF EXPLAINING! BETTER COME ALONG DOWN TO HEADQUARTERS!"

THEY QUESTIONED HIM ALL DAY. DANNY STUCK TO HIS STORY, THEY KEPT IT UP... INTO THE NIGHT...



"SHE WAS COVERED WITH THOSE SAME RED DOUGH-NUT-SHAPED WELTS, HURMES. WHAT DID YOU HIT HER WITH?"

"I DIDN'T! I SWEAR! IT'S WHEN I LEFT HER, SHE WAS ALIVE!"

THE LAB REPORTS CAME IN.

BLOOD DRAINED LIKE SO I LOOK
THE OTHERS! BRINE LIKE A
TRACES ON HER CLOTHES... VAMPIRE.



SHUT UP, HUGHES!
YOU'RE IN ENOUGH
OF A JAM.

CAPTAIN?
CAPTAIN?
JUST GOT
A CALL



SOME GAMB ON THE SOUTH SIDE
WAS JUST ATTACKED IN A HALL-
WAY! SHE MANAGED TO GET
AWAY! HER SCREAMING ATTRACTED
PATROLMAN HERESSEY WHO WAS
FOUNDING A DEAF HEARDY! HE
CHASED THE WOULD-BE KILLER
DOWN TO THE WATERFRONT...
AND LOST HIM!



THE WATERFRONT! THERE,
YOU SEE, YOU CRUMMY NEW-
FOUND! I WAS RIGHT!
THE KILLER'S A WATER-
FRONT CHARACTER.

A MINUTE AGO, YOU
WERE ACCUSING ME,
YOU DUMB BOK!
AM I FREE TO GO?



YEAH! YEAH! YOU'RE FIRST!
WANT TO COME ALONG? I WANT
TO QUESTION THE GAMB! YOU
CAN SIT IN! BUT YOU CAN'T
PRINT WHAT SHE SAYS UNLESS
I GIVE YOU THE OKAY!

AGREED!
LET'S GO...



THE WOMAN WAS IN HER THIRTIES. SHE TORMED OUT
HER STORY...

HE - HE MUST HAVE FOLLOWED
ME. HE CAME UP BEHIND ME IN
THE HALL. HE GRABBED MY WRISTS
AND HELD MY ARMS OUT. LIKE
THIS...

WHAT DID HE
LOOK LIKE?



I COULDN'T SEE HIS FACE!
BUT I SAW THOSE BURNING
EYES. HE HAD A MAT PULLED
DOWN OVER HIS FACE... HIS
COLLAR TURNED UP! AND HE
WORE GLOVES. I REMEMBER,
BECAUSE WHEN HE GRABBED
ME, I TRIED TO SCREAM, BUT
HE CLAMPEDA GLOVED HAND
OVER MY MOUTH!

THAT'S THE
GUY I SAW
LAST NIGHT,
CAPTAIN!
THE ONE
I TOLD
YOU ABOUT!



HE...HE STANK! IT... LIKE THE DOGS!
IT WAS A FUNKY SMELL... LIKE...



YES, *THAT'S* IT! IT WAS *AWFUL*, *AWFUL*! I MANAGED TO BREAK AWAY AND SCREAM, AND THE OFFICER CAME. AND... I GUESS I *FAINTED*. THAT'S ALL...



THEY LEFT HER AND DROVE BACK UPTOWN...

WELL, HUSH! WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY NOW ABOUT YOUR *VAMPIRE*? YOU HEARD HER STORY!

I GUESS I WAS *WROONG* CAPTAIN! BUT SOME-*THING* SHE SAID *BOTHERS* ME! WISH I COULD PUT MY FINGER ON IT! AND THOSE *WELTS*...



IT WAS AFTER MIDNIGHT THAT DANNY, NOT BEING ABLE TO SLEEP, DROVE DOWNTOWN TO THE DOCKS! HE LEFT HIS CAR AND BEGAN TO WALK...

WISH I COULD THINK OF WHAT IT WAS THAT DANE SAID THAT *BOTHERS* ME!



SUDDENLY DANNY SAW HIM, MOVING ALONG ON HUMBERT LESS. HIS COLLAR TURNED UP, HIS HAT BRIM TURNED DOWN, HIS EYES BURNING...

WHAT THE...? THERE HE GOES! IT'S HIM... *THE KILLER*!



DANNY DARTED AFTER THE SWIFTLY-MOVING GLIDING FIGURE...KEEPING OUT OF SIGHT...

HE'S HEADED TOWARD *WATERFRONT PARK*? LORD, HE LOOKS *STRANGE*. DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE A *NECK*!



THE GLIDING FIGURE CROSSED WATERFRONT PARK TOWARD A LARGE STONE STRUCTURE...

HE'S GOING INTO THE *CITY AQUARIUM*!



THE AQUARIUM SMELLED OF BRINE AND THE SEA AND PLACES SO DEEP AS DANNY SLID IN THROUGH THE DOOR...

THIS EXPLAINS THE BRINE ON THE CLOTHES! HE MUST HAVE DROPPED OUT HERE!



HUGE GLASS TANKS LINED THE WALLS ABOUT THE AQUARIUM. EXOTIC FISHES FROM THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH SAFFED OUT AT DANNY AS HE MOVED DOWN BEFORE THEM...

HE'S AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE! HIDING!



SUDDENLY DANNY SAW IT! THE EMPTY TANK! THE SIGN SCREAMED AT HIM!

"OCTOPUS! DEVIL FISH!"
GOOD LORD!



THE WOMAN! SHE SAID HE GRABBED HER BY EACH WRIST AND HELD HER ARMS OUT... AND THEN... MY GOD... THEN HE CLAMPED A HAND OVER HER MOUTH! THAT MEANS...



DANNY COULD HEAR PAT'S VOICE... THAT RIGHT... AS SHE STRUGGLED...

GRIPES! GUYS LIKE YOU ARE ALL ARMS!

THE WOUNDS! THE DOWNHILL-SHAPED WOUNDS! GASP! THE KILLER IS... IS...



A SOUND BEHIND DANNY MADE HIM SPIN AROUND SUDDENLY! IT SLITHERED TOWARD HIM ON ITS EIGHT SUCTION-CURPED TENTACLES. BEHIND IT, THE SLOUGHED HAT AND THE OVERCOAT AND THE GLOVES LAY IN A HEAP ON THE FLOOR...

AN OCTOPUS!



BEFORE DANNY HIGHER COULD MOVE, EIGHT TENTACLES HAD WRAPPED AROUND HIM, AND HUNDREDS OF SUCKING-DISCS WERE SUCKING THE WARM BLOOD FROM HIS STRUGGLING BODY!

NEVER! TEF! DANNY WAS ALL WRAPPED UP IN HIS WORK THAT NIGHT, KIDDIES! THE SUCKER! WHY ANYBODY SWEATS BLOOD FOR A MISERABLE JOB, I'LL NEVER KNOW! BUT DANNY DID! NOW HE'S HEADED HIS LAST COLUMN PARAGRAPH ONE... COUNTERS! AS FOR OSCAR THE OCTOPUS! WELL, YOU CAN SEE HIM, ANYTIME... DOWN AT THE AQUARIUM! HE'S STILL MAKING HIS NIGHTLY SOJOURNS, THOUGH! SO IF A GUY TAPS YOU ON THE

SHOULDER, FOLDS OUT HIS HAND FOR A MATCH, TIPS HIS HAT, AND STRAIGHTENS HIS TIE AT THE SAME TIME, BEWARE! 'EYE, NOW!



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OF OUR SCIENCE - FICTION
MAGAZINES! LOOK FOR...**



**LOOK FOR
THESE SEALS
WHEN YOU BUY!**

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AND THE 25¢ ANNUAL ANTHOLOGIES:
WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY
TWO-FISTED ANNUAL - TALES OF TERROR

REFUGE



He could hear the footsteps more distinctly now; there were several cops in pursuit, and they were closing in on him with each tick of the clock. He'd never be able to make it to the exit; he'd have to find a hiding place right here in the building. It was *that*... or 10 years in Dannemora for a second burglary conviction!

He *could* ditch the stuff, he supposed, but he had put too much time and effort into this job to throw away the priceless stones in a wave of hysteria. That bundle clutched in his hand would bring in 15 grand... It was worth the risk he was taking!

Walking swiftly, so as not to arouse the suspicion of the building guards, he found himself entering a vast circular room with huge glass enclosures dotting the high walls. It seemed, at first, as he crossed the enormous room, that he was in a glass bowl of some kind. No place to hide in *here*, he thought, conscious of the clicking heels coming down the corridor behind him. In another minute he might have to break into a sprint... then he was *really* finished! If there wasn't a place of refuge in the next room, his goose was cooked...

A sudden movement behind one of the glass walls made him stop in his tracks. There were hordes of fish behind those walls... it must be the Aquarium section of the building! His eyes darted quickly from tank to tank; off to one side, separated from the other glass enclosures, was a pool into which he thought he might be able to drop unseen. The fish were

small, he noted as he raced toward it . . . there was plenty of green shrubbery flourishing in the tank. Enough to hide him until his pursuers departed.

Moving quickly, he slid in beside the tank, inched up the slick glass wall and let himself down into the water just as the two policemen ran into the room. Making himself as inconspicuous as possible amidst the clinging greenery, he drew a deep breath and ducked under the surface. Through the thick glass he saw the policemen hesitate in the center of the chamber, glance around uncertainly, then race on through the far door.

Sobbing for breath, his head cleared the surface and he gulped fresh air again. The coast was clear now! Almost playfully he slipped at several of the fish coming towards him. With dismay he felt a sharp pain in the calf of one leg . . . and, at that moment, he saw for the first time the sign painted on the front of the tank.

"PIRANHAI!" the sign proclaimed. "Fish-Eating Fish!"

They were around him, now, covering him like a shroud. Their needle-sharp teeth tore at his skin . . . their weight and slashing teeth engulfed and swirled around him in a wave of blind savagery. He screamed for help . . . dropped the bundle he had been so anxious to protect. Desperately he tried to fight back . . . to fight his way out of this refuge he had found. But their ferocity kept him captive there in the tank; he felt the skin of his arms and legs torn from his body . . . tasted blood on his lips, where the piranha had slashed at his face.

He saw circles of flame before him, knew that he was being torn to pieces . . . felt their deadly teeth tearing into his throat now . . . his chest being ripped open before the relentless attack . . .



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THE VAULT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Pardon us, V. K., old been threatened, that tell, but we'd like to personally answer the complaints we have been receiving from many of our readers about the absence of your and other E.C. magazines from newsstands! As we mentioned last issue, there are over 500 different comic mags being published. The wholesalers are jammed up, and the retailers simply cannot properly handle this impossible number of titles. Consequently, in desperation, many newsdealers are returning bundles after bundles of comic mags to their wholesaler UNWANTED! Some of these bundles contain and newsworthy quotes of E.C. and this makes it next to impossible for you to obtain your copy, and at the same time makes it next to impossible for us to sell magazines! ASK YOUR NEWSDEALER TO MAKE SURE TO DISPLAY HIS QUOTA OF E.C. MAGAZINES IF HE DOES NOT HAVE ANY, ASK HIM TO ORDER THEM FROM HIS WHOLESALE. HIS WHOLESALE HAS THEM! THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF E.C. MAGAZINES. THEY ARE SIMPLY NOT GETTING PROPER DISPLAY! O.K., V.K! See's all yours!—Edison

Remember! No comic newsdealer WOULD give 'em proper display! Well, guess it's a waste! ... so let's get right into the mail!

Dear Vault-Keeper,

I read your books while waiting and love them! They help my digestion! So don't let those cowards whose letters you published in the Dec-Jan issue get you down! Boys are SUPPOSED to be better than girls, I've always heard!

Andrew Abernathy
Kingston, Tenn.

... My favorite time for reading is when I eat a meal afterward, wow! I ate a sandwich while reading the best of the best horror magazines—yours! "The Death" was a real stomach-turner, but it didn't bother me!

Russel Wilson
Woodville, Ga.

P.S. Please release loans. I take back what I said above. A sick head!—RW

... Things seem be pretty peaceful around E.C. lately! No one CRITICIZED you in your last letter page!

George Salento
Big Stone Gap, Va.

... I think your books are disgusting. I know this will not be printed because you are afraid of the truth, but I still say that I would never lower myself to reading your low-type literature.

Gary Schneider
San Francisco, Cal.

Things haven't changed a bit around E.C., George!

Dear V. K.,

I would like to trade E.C. mags with other readers. I got enough copies of your mags to trade. Mention it, huh?

Paul George
203 S. Stewart St.
Stamford, Pa.

... We started an E.C. Fan Club in 1961. Since that time, we are proud to say that our club has grown quite large. We have in our collection probably all

the major E.C. has published. We'd like to get in touch with other E.C. fan clubs.

Michael Posner
100 Grand Concourse
Bronx 24, N. Y.

I must write you this letter to tell you that your E.C. magazines have made for me and you many new friends and E.C. fans. People I hardly know, having discovered E.C., come to my house to read my book issues and catch up on what they've missed! I've nothing else in my house but good old E.C.!!

Frank Ray Stansbury
435 Flushing Ave.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

You're the PRESIDENT of a fan club and you don't know it, Frank!

Dear V. K.,

I can't tell you how thrilled I was to hear that you're going to adapt some stories by one of my favorite authors, Ray Bradbury. By the way, your latest issue was the epitome of republicanism. I've never enjoyed reading more!

Carol Flamb
Belmont, N. Y.

Adopting stories by Bradbury, just about the best, will fit your now unsurpassable responses to even greater heights!

Bill Lane
Cincinnati, Ohio

Thanks to Ronnie Mansgorder of Bloomington, Ill., "Joe Another Ghost" by McCook, Nebraska; Richard Lorenson of North Bergees, N. J., "Molly Lorenson of Arkland, Eg., Harriet Miller of Jersey City, Horrie Robertson of Scrabble, Cal., and Joe Trough of Ontario, Canada, for the follow additions to my horror list parade:

TAKES TWO TO STRANGLE

GOING DOWN MY LIFE

GHOUL DAYS (ETCHING A HORROR COM-SCI)

AS SLIME GOES BY

EMBALM YOURSELF (IT'S GREATER THAN TO STINK)

I'M IN THE MOOD FOR BLOOD

HAS ANY GHOUL SEEN MY BODY?

I GET IDEAS (OH, HUH, HUH)

I WENT STALKING DOWN BY THE RIVER

TWO CREEPY PEOPLE

Before closing, the big news you've been waiting for: The third annual TALES OF TERROR E.C.'s anthology of horror and SuspenseStories, is now ready! Again it contains 16 complete stories, 120 pages, and the price is still only 25c. It's so cool! And it's on the newsstand that holds your E.C. mags, and you're lucky enough to still want it, just flip up two bits ... taking care not to disturb the crows in his hairy's pants ... And all the mail, because it's a little, and "read" it to me at the below address. Subscriptions still 25c for a full year's supply ... six rich issues ... monthly envelopes ... come address us for mail (and letters), which is:

The Vault-Keeper
Room 284, Dept. 30
225 Lafayette St.
N. Y. C. 10, N. Y.

HERE'S A GAY TALE OF TINGLING
TERROR. I CALL THIS LAUGH RIOT...

PRACTICAL CHOKE!



IT WAS A MORNING IN MID-JULY. IT WAS HOT AND
STICKY AND THE CROWDED SUBWAY TRAIN SMELLED
OF SWEAT. THERE WERE THREE OF THEM: MEDICAL
STUDENTS FROM AN URBAN UNIVERSITY. THEY
HUNG ON THE SWAYING SUBWAY STRAPS, WHISPERING
AMONG THEMSELVES...

THE TRAIN SPED ON TOWARD CONEY ISLAND. AT EACH
STOP MORE PEOPLE, DISORIENTED WITH THE SWELTERING
CITY HEAT AND LONGING FOR A PLUNGE INTO THE
COOLING SURF, JAMMED THEIR WAY INTO THE BEACH-
BOUND SUBWAY CAR. THE STRAPS WERE ALL OCCU-
PIED WITH HANGERS-ON, SWINGING BACK AND FORTH.



SOME OF THEM WILL GO ON TO
THE END OF THE LINE.

WE'LL BET OUT
THE STOP BEFORE.



BRIGHTON BEACH? NEXT
STOP... CONEY ISLAND?

G'MON.
FELLERS.

THE TRAIN PULLED INTO THE BRIGHTON BEACH STATION. THE DOORS SWUNG OPEN. PEOPLE STARTED PUSHING TOWARD THEM...



THE CAR WAS EMPTYING FAST! THE THREE MEDICAL STUDENTS STOOD ON THE PLATFORM, PEERING BACK INTO THE TRAIN AT THE REMAINING RIDERS, WATCHING THEIR FACES...



THOSE WHO HAD BEEN STANDING SCRAMBLED FOR SEATS, THE STRAPS, ONCE JAMMED WITH HANDS, NOW WERE ALMOST ENTIRELY UNUSED. ONLY ONE SLENDER-FIST HANGER-ON REMAINED, CLINGING...



THE DOORS SLAMMED. THE TRAIN BEGAN TO MOVE...



ON THE PLATFORM, THE THREE MEDICAL STUDENTS HOWLED WITH GLEE, POINTING...



INDEED, INSIDE THE RECENTLY VACATED SUBWAY CAR, THOSE WHO REMAINED DID HAVE EXPRESSIONS OF VARIOUS EMOTIONS ON THEIR FACES. SOME WERE PALE... SOME CHALK-WHITE... SOME GREEN... SOME TURNED AWAY. THE ENTIRE CAR WAS STARRING AT THE REMAINING ARM, HANGING ON THE STRAP...



...WITH NO BODY ATTACHED...



THEY SAT UPON THE CROWDED BEACH DOWN NEAR THE WATER, LAUGHING AND TALKING. NEARBY, A NAPPING BATHER, PARTIALLY COVERED WITH A MOUND OF SAND, A NEWSPAPER OVER HIS FACE, SLEPT SOUNDLY.



HEY! TIDE'S COMIN' IN!
LET'S MOVE!

THE THREE MEDICAL STUDENTS PICKED UP THEIR BEACHBAG AND PUSHED BACK...AWAY FROM THE INCOMING SURF...BACK INTO THE GROVE THAT OVERFLOWED THE SAND.



HEY, MISTER! TIDE'S COMIN' IN!
BETTER MOVE!

THE NAPPING BATHER WAS OBVIOUS TO THE STUDENTS' WARNING. HE SLEPT ON. THE THREE OF THEM WELTED INTO THE GROVE.

THEY WATCHED FROM THE SAFETY AND SHELTER OF THE GROVE AS SOMEONE APPROACHED THE DANDY SLEEPING FIGURE.

NO RESPONSE. A HUSH SEEMED TO FALL OVER THE IMMEDIATE AREA. ALL EYES TURNED. THERE WAS A CONSTANT TITTERING.



SAY! THE TIDE IS COMING IN!
BETTER WAKE THAT GUY UP!



HEY! MISTER! HEY!
BETTER WAKE UP!



MISTER! WAKE UP, MISTER! HEY! CAN YOU HEAR ME?

WAYHE... WAYHE... HE'S DEAF!

SOMEONE LIFTED THE FOLDED NEWSPAPER. A BLANK SAND-WOUND STARED BACK AT HIM.

SOMEONE ELSE KNELT TO GRAB THE PROSTRATE FORM'S LEGS. THEY CAME AWAY FROM THE MOUND OF SAND, WITH NO BODY ATTACHED.



HEY, MISTER! HOW CAN YOU BREATHE?
GIMME A HAND, HENNY!



GOOD LORD! GASP! SNOKE!

THEY MOVED ALONG THE BOARDWALK...THE THREE OF THEM...THE TEARS STREAMING FROM THEIR EYES AS THEY LAUGHED.



IT WAS ONE OF THOSE PHOTOGRAPHER'S SHOPS FOUND AT MOSTLY ANY AMUSEMENT AREA. IT HAD THE USUAL OLD-TIME AUTO, AND THE FIGHT BOAT WITH THE PAINTED WAVES SET IN FRONT OF A BACKDROP...



THERE WAS MUCH LAUGHTER AND A CROWD BEGAN TO GATHER. THE PHOTOGRAPHER QUICKED UNDER HIS HOOD, FOCUSING ON THE FACES PEERING OUT FROM THE OPENING.



THE SHUTTER CLICKED. ONE OF THE BOYS CAME OUT FROM BEHIND THE CARD AND MELTED INTO THE CROWD. THE OTHER'S FACE STILL GAZED FROM THE HOLE...



THE AMPLIFIED VOICES OF THE BARKERS BLARED AT THE THREE MEDICAL STUDENTS FROM THE VARIOUS CORSESSORS ALONG THE BOARDWALK. ONE OF THEM STOPPED AND MOVED...



ONE OF THE BOYS POINTED TO THE INEVITABLE CARD WITH THE TWO HOLES IN IT WHERE THE HEADS OF THE EXAGGERATED PAIR OF FIGURES PAINTED UPON IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN.



THE FACE DIDN'T MOVE! THE PHOTOGRAPHER WENT OVER AND RAPPED THE CARD. FOR A MOMENT THE HEAD SMARRED... THEN ITCHED OUTWARD...



THE HEAD ROLLED TO THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' FEET. HE SCREAMED...



THE CROWD TOOK UP THE MYSTERICAL CHORUS...



THE THREE MEDICAL STUDENTS CARTED UP A SIDE-STREET, SLEEPFULLY SIBBLING...



THE SUBWAY TRAIN SPED THEM BACK UPTOWN. THEY SAT, RED-FACED AND TEAR-FILLED, THE THREE BEACH BAGS, NOW EMPTY OF THEIR BODILY CONTENTS, PARKED AT THEIR FEET.



BY THE TIME THEY REACHED THE CAMPUS, THEIR DISCUSSION HAD BECOME SERIOUS.



THE ONLY THING TO DO IS DISPOSE OF THE REST OF IT...

WHEE! IT WON'T BE AHEAD!

G'DON! LET'S SEE IF WE CAN SNEAK INTO THE LAB!



THE MEDICAL BUILDING OF THE UNIVERSITY WAS LOCKED. IT WAS A SATURDAY DURING SUMMER SESSION. IT WAS TO BE EXPECTED...



THEY MOVED DOWN THE SILENT HALL...



WE'LL CHOP WHAT'S LEFT UP INTO SMALL SEGMENTS AND TAKE THEM OUT IN OUR BEACH-BAGS!

MAYBE WE CAN THINK OF SOME MORE BAGS!

OH, NO! I COULDN'T!

...UNTIL THEY CAME TO THE REFRIGERATOR ROOM WHERE THE BODIES USED FOR DISSECTIONS WERE KEPT.



ROLL IT OUT!

HURRY!

THE SLAB ROLLED OUT OF THE WALL, REVEALING THE PARTIALLY DISMEMBERED CORPSE. THEY SET TO WORK, FINISHING THE JOB.



YOU KNOW, THIS GUY WERE WASN'T AN UNIDENTIFIED! HE SPILLED HIS BODY TO MEDICAL RESEARCH...

WELL... HE WON'T MIND IF WE'VE USED HIM FOR VERY COMMERICAL JOBS!

AS THEY CROWDED ABOUT THE BODY, WIELDING THEIR SCALPELS HASTILY, THEY NEVER NOTICED THE COILED-UP INTESTINES SLITHER FROM THE BEACH BAG BEHIND THEM...



WHAT'LL WE DO WITH THE BAGS OF WHAT'S LEFT?

HURRY 'EM SOMEWHERE! MAYBE PUT A FEW ROCKS IN 'EM AND THROW 'EM IN THE RIVER!

YOU HEAR SOMETHING?

THE SLIMY SUCKING SOUNDS OF THE INTESTINES SLIDING ACROSS THE MARBLE FLOOR MADE THE THREE BAG-LOVING STUDENTS SPIN AROUND...



GOOD LORD!

IT'S... IT'S A SHAPE!

NO! NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!

ON A HUNCH, THE POLICE, INVESTIGATING THE CASES REPORTED THE PREVIOUS DAY, CHECKED WITH THE UNIVERSITY. WHEN THEY GOT TO THE REFRIGERATOR ROOM WHERE THE CORPSES WERE KEPT, THEY FOUND THE THREE MEDICAL STUDENTS... THEIR FACES BLUE, THEIR EYES BULGING FROM THEIR SOCKETS, THEIR TONGUES HANGING FROM THEIR WIDE OPEN-MOUTHS... THE LONG STRANDS OF INTESTINE WRAPPED TIGHTLY AROUND EACH OF THEIR NECKS...



CHORE...

WHICH IS EXACTLY WHAT THEY DID. OFFICER! THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTELLIGENT COMMENT! AND AS FOR YOU READERS... WELL, IF ANY OF YOU ARE IN MED-SCHOOLS, DON'T GET ANY IDEAS! REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENS TO MED STUDENTS WHO USE PARTS OF BODIES AS BAGS? THEY DIE, ALL RIGHT... UNTIL THEY DROP DEAD! NOW, IF YOU'VE GOT THE BUTS, GO ON TO THE OLD WITCH FOR THE MIND UP TO MY BLICK-BAG!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! WELL... SALT MY SLOP-STEW AND SLING ME A SLOP, IF IT ISN'T MY TURN TO ENTERTAIN YOU. GRAB! THE DRAG IN THE CAULDRON IS DRAWLING, WHICH MEANS ITS REEKING-RIPE, OR DONE TO PERFECTION IN GULINARY CHATTER (HEY THAT! SO, HOP INTO THE MIGHT, HORRORS... THE MIGHT OF FEAR... AND YOUR SCREAM-SCOLLION, THE OLD WITCH, WILL POP A PUTRID PORTION OF PROSE INTO YOUR FELDING FAPS. I CALL THIS TASTE OF TERROR...

NOTES TO YOU!



JURSON SLACK RE-READ THE LETTER FOUR TIMES. HE JUST COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. THE LETTER WAS FROM "AN ANONYMOUS FRIEND". IT WAS ONE OF THOSE SHOCKING LETTERS, FILLED WITH THINGS ONE DARES NOT TO READ ABOUT ONE'S OWN WIFE. IT READ...

'DEAR MR. SLACK,

SINCE I CANNOT SIT IDLY BY AND SEE YOU MADE A FOOL OF, I AM WRITING THIS NOTE TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR WIFE, ELEANOR, IS CARRYING ON AN ILLICIT LOVE AFFAIR WITH ANDREW COCKSON. I SAW THEM TOGETHER LAST NIGHT, THE 25TH, IN HIS PARKED CAR. SON... 'IN A.' SON... 'COMPROMISING.' COCKSON... OH, NO! NO! ELEANOR...



JUDSON BLACK TRIED TO GO BACK TO HIS OFFICE WORK, BUT COULDN'T! HE MADE A PHONE CALL, AND THEN DROVE HOME.

JUDSON: WHY SO EARLY?

YOU WERE OUT LAST NIGHT! YOU SAID YOU WENT TO PLAY CARDS! YOU LIED, DIDN'T YOU?

W-HO? I DID GO TO PLAY CARDS!

YOU LIED! I CHECKED... WITH YOUR BABBY FACE FRIENDS! HE SAID YOU DIDN'T COME OVER LAST NIGHT! YOU SAW ANDREW GOODSON LAST NIGHT, DIDN'T YOU?

ANDREW GOODSON? NO! I DIDN'T!

THEN WHERE DID YOU GO? I HAPPEN TO KNOW THAT YOU WERE OUT WITH HIM, PARKED DOWN BY THE RIVER IN HIS CAR!

JUDSON! HOW COULD YOU SAY SUCH A THING? NOW COULD YOU BELIEVE SUCH A THING ABOUT ME? I THOUGHT YOU LOVED ME! SOB...

TRYING TO MAKE A SICKER OUT OF ME, LENO? DON'T PUT ON THE TEAR-ACT, ELEANOR! I'VE PROVED YOU OUT! NOW, I'M THROUGH WITH YOU!

JUDSON, WAIT! DON'T LEAVE ME! I... I LIED ABOUT PLAYING CARDS LAST NIGHT! I ADMIT IT! BUT I DIDN'T SEE ANDREW GOODSON! I... I WANTED IT TO BE A SURPRISE! I... I WENT SHOPPING LAST NIGHT FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

HAI! A LIKELY STORY! PRETTY GOOD, BUT NO DICE! I GOT PROOF! ELEANOR! I GOT PROOF THAT YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A DIRTY CHEAT! AND I'M PULLING OUT GOOD-BYE!

JUDSON BLACK SLAMMED THE DOOR AND STAMPEDED DOWN THE WALK, FROM THE HOUSE. HE COULD HEAR HIS WIFE'S PITIFUL SOBBING. HE PLUNGED OPEN THE CAR DOOR ANGRILY, SWUNG IT SHUT, AND DROVE AWAY.

WHAT WAS THAT? BOUNDED LIKE A RACHPER! "MOMMY GOT TO HAVE MY CARRIAGE FOR CLEANER ONE OF THESE DAYS!"

THE NEXT MORNING JUDSON CAME HOME FOR HIS CLOTHES. HE FOUND ELEANOR SPRAWLED ON THE FLOOR, A REVOLVER IN ONE HAND, A SMALL PACKAGE IN THE OTHER. SHE'D BEEN DEAD FOR SOME TIME. THE TAG ON THE PACKAGE WAS SHORT AND SWEET. IT READ:

'HAPPY BIRTHDAY' CHOKED. 'DARLING... FROM YOUR... LOVING... WIFE! THEN, THEN... ELEANOR! MY GOD! WHAT HAVE I DONE TO YOU?'

HORTON COULD READ THE LETTER WITH MIXED EMOTIONS OF HURT AND ANGER. IT WAS A PAINFUL LETTER TO READ. IT WAS A SHOCKING, BRAGGING, HARD-TO-BELIEVE SIMON PITTER, HIS MOST TRUSTED EMPLOYEE...



...IS THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEKING, THE ONE WHO STOLE THE TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS FROM YOUR SAFE LAST MONTH, SINCE THE ROBBERY, HE HAS DEPOSITED A LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY IN HIS ACCOUNT AT THE BANK, BOUGHT A NEW CAR, AND...

THE LETTER WAS SIGNED "AN ANONYMOUS FRIEND." HORTON COULD MAKE SEVERAL PHONE CALLS, THEN HE WENT INTO SIMON PITTER'S LITTLE OFFICE...



AND I TRUSTED YOU! NEXT YEAR I WAS GOING TO RETIRE YOU WITH A LIFE-TIME PENSION! I THOUGHT YOU WERE A LOYAL EMPLOYEE! AND YOU DID THIS TO ME!

HUNT WHY... MR. COX? I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND!



GET OUT, PITTER! GET OUT OF THIS OFFICE! DON'T EVER SHOW YOUR ROTTEN FACE AROUND HERE AGAIN! YOU DIRTY THIEF...

THIEF? ME? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU KNOW VERY WELL WHAT I MEAN, PITTER! I FOUND OUT ABOUT YOUR DEPOSIT, YOUR NEW CAR, YOUR NEW CLOTHES! BY ALL RIGHTS I OUGHT TO HAVE YOU ARRESTED! GET OUT OF HERE!

MR. COX? I... I DON'T DO ANYTHING! IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THAT BRASS THIEF, I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!



I'M LETTING YOU OFF EASY, PITTER! I COULD SEND YOU UP THE RIVER FOR TWENTY YEARS FOR THIS! DON'T TRY TO DENY IT! YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A FILTHY CRIMINAL!

I NEVER STOLE ANYTHING IN MY LIFE, MR. COX! HOW COULD YOU THINK SUCH A THING OF ME? AFTER ALL THESE... YES... YEARS...



MR. COX LEFT SIMON HUMMING LIKE A BIRD AND STORMED BACK INTO HIS OFFICE. HE REACHED FOR THE PHONE, SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A SCREAM...



MR. PITTER? DON'T...

GOOD LORD!

MR. PITTER LEAPED SEVEN STORIES TO HIS DEATH ON THE STREET BELOW. MR. COX SHOOK HIS HEAD SADLY AND WENT DOWNSTAIRS. WHEN THE POLICE CAME...

HE KILLED HIMSELF BECAUSE I FOUND OUT THAT HE WAS THE ONE THAT STOLE THE MONEY!

HUNT PITTER? HUNT PITTER? HE WAS CLEAN AS A WHISTLE! HE WAS ON HIS VACATION WHEN IT HAPPENED! DON'T YOU REMEMBER? POOR BIRD! WENT WEST... TO CLAIM HIS SISTER'S ESTATEFUND! LEFT HIM SOME MONEY...



EVERILL WINTON LOOKED OUT OF HIS BANK OFFICE AT THE CROWD THAT LINED UP BEFORE EACH TELLER'S CAGE.

WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE, FIELDS? LOOKS LIKE ALMOST EVERYBODY IN TOWN'S OUT THERE!

THEY'RE ALL WITH-DRAWING THEIR MONEY, MR. WINTON! CLOSING THEIR ACCOUNTS!



MR. WINTON PALED.

NOT ALL OF THEM! GOOD LORD! THEY'LL JUST TAKE THE BANK... I'LL BE RUINED! RUINED!

IT'S THIS LETTER, MR. WINTON. EVERYONE SEEMS TO HAVE GOTTEN ONE. OF COURSE, I DON'T BELIEVE A WORD. BUT THE TOWN'S FOLK...



EVERILL WINTON READ THE LETTER. IT WAS SIGNED 'AN ANONYMOUS FRIEND'. IT SAID...

'DEAR DEPOSITOR, THE PRESIDENT OF THE TOWN BANK, EVERILL WINTON, HAS BEEN EMBODDING BANK FUNDS. ANY DAY NOW, THE POLICE WILL DISCOVER IT, AND YOUR LIFE'S SAVINGS WILL BE LOST'. SIGNED...



STOP THEM, BERT! TELL THEM IT ISN'T TRUE! HOW COULD THEY SUDDENLY HAVE LOST THEIR FAITH IN ME?



I, I FRIED, MR. WINTON. I REALLY TRIED! THEY'RE FRIGHTENED!

ALL MY LIFE I'VE LIVED HONESTLY. I TRIED TO GAIN MY FELLOW TOWN PEOPLE'S CONFIDENCE. NOW WITH ONLY THE WORD OF A POISON-PEN LETTER, THEY FORSAKE ME. TURN AGAINST ME!

I... I HAVE IT, MR. WINTON! WAIT HERE! THEY FORSAKE ME!



BERT FIELDS HURRIED OUT OF MR. WINTON'S OFFICE. HE RAISED HIS VOICE ABOVE THE CLAMOR IN THE BANK LOBBY.

WAIT! LISTEN TO ME! I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE ANY CHANCES! BUT... WHY WORRY ABOUT YOUR MONEY? WE'RE INSURED! YOUR MONEY IS SAFE... EVEN IF WHAT THAT LETTER SAYS ABOUT MR. WINTON IS TRUE! AND BELIEVE ME... IT ISN'T!

THAT'S RIGHT! OUR DEPOSITS ARE FEDERALLY INSURED! WHY NOT GIVE OLD MAN WINTON A CHANCE?



BUT IT WAS TOO LATE! IN HIS OFFICE, EVERILL WINTON SLUMPED ACROSS HIS DESK, THE LETTER-OWNER STICKING OUT OF HIS CHEST.



AMBROSE BALDWIN WAS A GRUMPY, BITTER OLD MAN. NO ONE LIKED AMBROSE BALDWIN, ESPECIALLY MR. POPPIN, THE CANDY-STORE MAN. AMBROSE WAS ALWAYS ESPECIALLY NASTY TO MR. POPPIN.

SERVICE, BLAST YOU! SERVICE!

OH, HOLD YOUR HORSES, MR. BALDWIN! THESE KIDS WERE HERE FIRST! THEY GOT SERVED FIRST! WHAT'LL IT BE, KID?

MR. POPPIN MADE THE KIDS THEIR MALTED MILK, AND THEN FINALLY TURNED TO MR. BALDWIN.

YOU'RE LATE! YOU'RE THE ONLY CANDY STORE IN TOWN! ELSE I WOULDN'T COME HERE!

FOR MY PART YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME HERE AT ALL!

GIVE ME A BOTTLE OF ONE!

HERE! TAKE IT... WITH MY COMPLIMENTS AS A PARTING GIFT! DON'T BOTHER COMING BACK TO MY STORE! I DON'T NEED YOU AND YOUR SOON-TO-BE BUSINESS!

MRS. BALDWIN CURSED MR. POPPIN AND STORMED OUT OF HIS STORE. SOON, HE CAME TO HIS SAN-SHARLE OLD HOUSE.

WELL, WE'LL SOON MEET MR. POPPIN! HEH, HEH! JUST LIKE THE OTHERS!

ONCE INSIDE HIS HOUSE, THE OLD MAN SAT DOWN AT HIS TABLE, TOOK A PEN AND THE NEW BOTTLE OF ONE, AND BEGAN TO WRITE.

LET'S SEE! DEAR COUNTY COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC HEALTH, THE CANDY STORE IN OUR TOWN, OWNED BY MR. POPPIN, IS A DISGRACE AND A THREAT TO THE HEALTH OF THIS COMMUNITY.

AND THE NEXT DAY, AT THE COUNTY SEAT...

THE CANDY HE SELLS OUR CHILDREN IS WORMY AND ROTTEN. RODENTS INFEST THE PLACE, RUMSINGING RIGHT OUT IN FRONT OF PEOPLE, AS DO COCK-ROACHES AND OTHER ULTRY PESTS. I DEMAND THAT THIS STORE BE SHUT DOWN.

WELL, LET'S GO OVER AND TAKE A LOOK AT THAT CANDY STORE, COMMISSIONER!

ANONYMOUS

MEANWHILE, IN MR. POPPIN'S SPIC-AND-SPAN STORE...

IF I COULD ONLY GET MY HANDS ON THAT POISON-PEN-LETTER WRITER, I'D... I'D...

WHO CAN IT BE? WHO WOULD WANT TO DO SUCH A THING? HOW CAN WE FIND OUT?

MR. JACOB BLANK, MR. HORTON COO, AND MR. BERT FIELDS SAT IN A BOOTH, OUT OF SIGHT.

MY MY ELATED! HERE'S A SORE... BECAUSE I BELIEVED WHAT THAT LAR SAID!

MY OLD FRIEND, MY MOST TRUSTED EMPLOYEE... SIMON PITTER... HE FORGOT... BECAUSE I BELIEVED...

AND MR. WINTON'S HIS HEART WAS BROKEN WHEN THEY ALL BELIEVED THOSE LIES!



TWO MEN WALKED INTO THE STORE. ONE STOPPED TO TALK TO MR. POPPIN. THE OTHER NOSED AROUND.

MR. POPPIN! WE RECEIVED AN ANONYMOUS LETTER ABOUT YOUR STORE, THAT IT WAS FILTHY... ROBERT INFESTED... THAT YOU SOLD WORMY CANDY... HAD COCKROACHES...

MY STORES! BUT WHO COULD HAVE WRITTEN SUCH TERRIBLE THINGS ABOUT MY STORE?



I HAVE THE LETTER RIGHT HERE, MR. POPPIN! SEE FOR YOURSELF!

BUT... BUT THIS IS A BLANK PIECE OF PAPER!



HOW? LET'S SEE! SAY? THAT'S FUNNY! HEH, HEH! MUST'VE BEEN SOME SORT OF GAG, MR. POPPIN! I'M SORRY!

THIS PLACE IS CLEAN, COMMISSIONER! LET'S GO!



THEY WENT OUT! MR. POPPIN WATCHED THEM GO! BERT FIELDS CALLED FROM THE BOOTH...

SOMEONE! PLAY A JOKE ON MR. POPPIN!

THAT WAS NO JOKE, GENTLEMEN! THAT WAS ANOTHER OF THOSE POISON-POX LETTERS... ANOTHER PAK OF MALICIOUS LIES!



IT WAS MEANT TO BE DEADLY SERIOUS! IT WAS MEANT TO HARM ME LIKE THOSE OTHER LETTERS HE WROTE! YESTERDAY, AMBROSSE BALDWIN CAME IN. HE ARGUED, HE'S SUCH A SOUR OLD MAN, I THOUGHT A JOKE WOULD CHEER HIM UP...



...SO I GAVE HIM A BOTTLE OF DISAPPEARING INK! THAT LETTER WAS WRITTEN BY AMBROSSE BALDWIN!

THAT'S WHY THE LETTER WAS BLANK, EN? THE INK DISAPPEARED!

SO HE'S THE ONE WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THOSE LIES! BUT WHY? WHY DID HE DO IT?



JUDSON SLACK GASED...

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO! I TOOK ELEANOR AWAY FROM HIM! WE WERE BOTH IN LOVE WITH HER, BUT SHE PICKED ME! HE... HE'S CARRIED A BURDEN ALL THIS TIME!



HORTON COX SHAPED HIS FINGERS...

GOOD LORD! FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, HE AND SIMON PITTER APPLIED FOR THE SAME JOB. I CHOOSE SIMON. HE MUST'VE HATED SIMON FOR IT EVER SINCE...



BERT FIELDS NODDED...

YES! I REMEMBER NOW! MR. MINTON TURNED HIM DOWN WHEN HE APPLIED FOR A LOAN. HE DIDN'T HAVE THE COLLATERAL NEEDED. MR. MINTON ALWAYS WANTED TO PROTECT HIS DEPOSITS. IT WAS FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, AT LEAST.



AMBROSE BALDWIN LOOKED UP TO SEE THREE MEN STANDING OVER HIM.

SLACK! COX! FIELDS! WHY, WHY HAVE YOU SNEAKED IN LIKE THIS?

EVERYTHING YOU WROTE WAS A LIE, AMBROSE!

YOU'VE WRITTEN YOUR LAST POISON PEN LETTER... YOUR LAST LIE...



AMBROSE WAS HELD DOWN WHILE EACH MAN IN HIS TURN FILLED HIS FOUNTAIN PEN WITH THE SOLUTION OF LIE THEY'D BRUGHT, SHARRED IT INTO THE SISTER OLD MAN'S BODY, AND EMPTIED IT INTO HIS BLOOD-STREAM.

NOW IT'S WE WHO HAVE THE POISON-PENS, AMBROSE.

WE WHO ARE FILLING YOU WITH LIE...



AGAIN AND AGAIN EACH OF THE MEN REPEATED THE ACTION UNTIL AMBROSE'S SCREAMS STOPPED. THEN, THEY WATCHED AS AMBROSE'S BODY BEGAN TO SLACKEN, STEAM AND BUBBLE, AND FINALLY REDUCE TO A FOUL-SMELLING, ODDING POOL OF PUTREFACENCE, DISSOLVED BY THE POISON FROM WITHIN.



HEE, HEE! WELL, THAT'S WHAT SUFFERS TO PEOPLE WITH POISON IN THEIR HEARTS, BODIES. THEY ESSENTIALLY ARE DESTROYED FROM WITHIN. AMBROSE Poured OUT ONE LIE AFTER THE OTHER, BUT FINALLY HE GOT A REFILL... ONE LIE AFTER THE OTHER, AND ALL... NOW GET THIS PEN... AND ALL BE-

CAUSE I'VE GOT SOME STORE MAN GAVE HIM SOME DISAPPEARING INK! AND NOW I THINK I'LL DISAPPEAR AFTER THAT ROTTEN SNAKEHOLE TELLING YOUR LIES! LUNGO! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY HAD, THE MIGHT OF FEAR! BYE, NOW!



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MADE BY REMCO

CALLING SPACE POLICE, COME IN ON YOUR WALKIE TALKIE



GEE THIS WALKIE TALKIE IS LIKE A REAL TELEPHONE! ARE YOU REALLY IN THE BASEMENT?



THIS WAS A KEEN IDEA TO HOOK UP OUR WALKIE TALKIES BETWEEN THE HOUSES



IF ALL THE KIDS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD GET WALKIE TALKIES YOU CAN HAVE A REGULAR NET WORK AND PUT ON YOUR OWN PROGRAMS



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You Can Win All These
just as I did
in 10
MINUTES
OF FUN
A DAY!

I GAINED
60 LBS. OF HANDSOME
MUSCLES!

Which of these
2 ME'S is YOU?

that 125 lb. - 6 ft. CHICKEN
WEAKLING WAS ME
A FEW SHORT WEEKS AGO

NO! friend you
don't have to be
SKINNY any more.
Just mail NOW the FREE
coupon below as I did.
Soon YOU can add
7 inches to your CHEST
3½ inches to EACH
ARM and the rest in
proportion as I did.

Come On, PAL
NOW YOU give me
10 PLEASANT MINUTES A DAY
in YOUR OWN HOME
and I'll give YOU

A NEW HE-MAN BODY for
your OLD SKELETON FRAME
100% **George P. Sawell** World's Greatest
Builder of HE-MEN

NO! I don't care how skinny or lanky you
are. If you're a teen-ager, in your 20's
or 30's or over, if you're short or tall, or
what work you do. All I want is just 10
EXCITING MINUTES in your home to MAKE
YOU OVER by the SAME METHOD
I turned myself from a weakling to
a Champion of Champions

THIS MAY BE
YOUR LAST
CHANCE
TO GET FOR
ALL 5 10¢
PICTURE
PACKED COUPONS
MILLIONS HAVE
BEEN SOLD FOR
\$1 AND MORE

How to Build
MIGHTY
ARMS
How to Build
MIGHTY
BACK
How to Build
MIGHTY
CHEST
How to Build
MIGHTY
LEGS
How to Build
MIGHTY
GRIP
FREE
PHOTO BOOK
HOW
to develop
forms of chest
muscles of men

How to BECOME A
MIGHTY HE-MAN
GEORGE P. SAWELL
"Champion of
Champions"
4 times Winner
Perfect
Muscle Contest



Test You first
can win \$100
and other 24th
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if you MAIL coupon
below NOW. Your cup-
ons can seem to like
mine. A few weeks ago
I was a skinny weakling
like you. I had no girls in
sight for me nights. TODAY
everybody admires my change
where star build. My friends
add. My beloved COFFEE My
wife wants SHOULDERERS. My
POPULARITY with boys. The
way GIRLS go for me. Once
in a while. My new prop-
erty in SPQR'S. My new
success in STUDIES. My
double energy at work

There's that
slender JOWNS
and pass him by



JOHN SILL
was a 125 lb.
6 ft. WEAKLING
LOOK at him NOW
A MOVIE-STAR HE-MAN
from Head to Toe

as YOU
can be
saan!

YES! You'll see INCH upon INCH of MIGHTY MUSCLE added to YOUR
ARMS. Your CHEST deepened. Your BACK and SHOULDER
broadened. From head to heels, you'll become an ALL-AROUND, ALL-
AMERICAN HE-MAN WINNER - or my training won't cost you one sat-
isfy cent!

Develop YOUR 520 MUSCLES
Gain Pounds, INCHES, FAST!

AFTER a LIFETIME STUDY of every way known to develop your body I
have devised THE BEST BY TEST, my 5-WAY PROGRESSIVE POWER
the only method that builds you 5 ways fast. You save YEARS. BOL-
DERS like movie star Tom Tyler did. Like champ John Sill did. Like
MANY THOUSANDS like you did. SO MAIL coupon NOW!

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Dept. EN 32
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Director

SEND TO: UNIVERSITY OF PHYSICAL TRAINING
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Dear George: Please mail to me FREE (value \$1) Photo Book of
Strong Men and a Muscle Meter. Also all 5 HE-MAN Building
Coupons. I want to Build a Mighty Chest. I want to Build a
Mighty Arm. I want to Build a Mighty Back. I want to Build a
Mighty Leg. I want to Build a Mighty Grip. I want to Build a
Mighty Body. I want to become a Mighty HE-MAN. Enclosed find the
FREE PHYSICAL AND HANDLING (see C.O.R. 4)

NAME _____ AGE _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____

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| Cord | Edsel Ford | International | |
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| Genoa | Laurel | Laurel | |
| Harley Davidson | Laurel | Laurel | |
| International | Laurel | Laurel | |
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